EMILIA.

A

TRAGEDY.

BY

MARK ANTHONY MEILAN.

I pray you, in your letters
When you ſhall theſe unhappy deeds relate,
Write of me as I am.——Then muſt you ſpeak
Of one, that lov'd———not wiſely but too well.

SHAKESPEARE.

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1771

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JUL

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE hint for the following tragedy was taken from the Spectator, No. 491. The ſtory mentions, that a certain governor, captivated with the beauty of a lady, in order to effectuate his deſires, cauſed the huſband to be apprehended on a falſe charge; that when ſhe applied in his behalf, he diſcloſed the terms, on which alone, a pardon could be procured; that on her revealing this overture to her huſband, his fears induced him to perſuade her, tho' indeed obliquely, to preſerve him; that a miſtaken tenderneſs added weight to thoſe perſuaſions and brought about the governor's gratification; that notwithſtanding this, he ordered the ſentence to be executed; and that in revenge, ſhe appealed to the duke of Burgundy, and obtained the following redreſs, "that her ſeducer "ſhould marry her, and ſign a gift of his whole "eſtate to her after his deceaſe," upon which, to ſecure her in the quiet poſſeſſion of the bequeſt, he commanded his immediate execution.

Such are the circumſtances of the ſtory: how far the author has deviated from them, will appear in the ſequel. The ſcene is tranferred to Padua, and the duke brought into the foreſt for the preſervation of the unities; the characters of Sebaſtian and the banditti, with all the added incidents, are introduced to enlarge, and make more intereſting the plan: what other liberties have been taken muſt be aſcribed to the following conſiderations. Firſt,

It

ADVERTISEMENT.

It is not conſiſtent with poetical juſtice that the huſband ſhould ſuffer undeſervingly; he ſays *undeſervingly*, becauſe ſecondly, a huſband's propounding for his ſafety by the violation of a wife's honour, is ſhocking to nature, and could never be repreſented before an audience. Thirdly, The reparation extorted from the governor by the duke is ſpecious. Fourthly, The implication of the wife's accepting that reparation, is irreconcileable with the love ſhe had ſhewn her firſt huſband: and laſtly, the tacit intimation of ſurviving her innocence, is repugnant to the buſineſs of the drama, for cauſes tho' they may alleviate crimes, cannot remove them.

THE CHARACTER.

MECENAS, Duke of Venice.
ALBERT, Commandant of Padua.
SEBASTIAN, and REGINALD, aſſaſſins.
JULIO, a wealthy citizen.
ROLANDO, LUCIUS, VALENTINE and LEOLINE, baniſhed banditti.
EMILIA, wife of Julio.
PROVOST and FRIAR.
CORNELIO, the duke's gentleman.

SERVANTS, ATTENDANTS of the duke, OTHER BANDITTI and COMMON PEOPLE.

The Scene lies partly at Padua, and partly in a forcſt bordering on the ſuburbs.

EMILIA.

ACT I.

SCENE I. *An Apartment in the Houſe of* Albert.

ALBERT. SEBASTIAN.

ALBERT.

NO, no Sebaſtian,——why, I think it fitting
To have thy helping hand, is, that I cannot,
Directly as I would, proceed to gratify
The rage of my deſires upon Emilia;
Whoſe beauty, though 'tis great, falls yet far ſhort
Of what her ſoul adorns:—I mean her virtue.

SEBASTIAN.

I underſtand you well;——on with your ſtory.

ALBERT.

Her huſband, whom, for divers weighty reaſons,—
E'er he did that, for which he ſoon muſt ſuffer,—
I, as my friend eſteem'd, was lately cited
T' appear before the judge, and there, make anſwer
To a preferred charge of groſſeſt treaſon,
Practis'd and bent againſt the duke of Venice,
Our worthy and good lord.

SEBASTIAN.

Proceed.

ALBERT.

Conviction
Follow'd his crime, and now he's bound in fetters
Under the doom of death ;—his wife Emilia,
Loving him much, from day to day comes hither
Pleading his life ; but, ſo her tears add beauty
To the fair cheeks they ſtain, that I, believe me,
With an unlawful flame, myſelf conſuming,
Hear not the ſuit ſhe makes.

SEBASTIAN.

'Tis well, what follows ?

ALBERT.

Why it ſhould be, I know not, but 'tis certain,
What in her proſp'rous days, the ſmile of beauty
Ne'er could effect ; the tears and ſorrows of it
Have in my heart produc'd.—in vain Sebaſtian
Have I eſſay'd to quench the flame that burns me ;
Whilſt what I do, reſembling unctious matter
Into a furnace thrown, but makes it hotter,
Raiſing a ten-fold blaze.

SEBAS-

SEBASTIAN.

Well ſir, what further?

ALBERT.

This gentleman condemn'd, whoſe name is Julio,
(One of the richeſt citizens in Padua,)
Was to the duke moſt dear:——now I, Sebaſtian,
No leſs accounted of, owe to his grace,
The fortunes I poſſeſs;—when young, he took me
Under his eye, planted me in his favour;
And to crown all; alledging certain ſervice,
I did him in the wars to which he led me;
Made me commandant here; where, tho' my power,
Great in itſelf, may licence all I covet;
Yet as for reaſons of much weight, I cannot
Do what I would, in day light,—I have taken
Thee to inſtruct me.

SEBASTIAN.

You are young, and have not
Climb'd to the knowledge of ſuch arts, as ſooneſt
Work on weak female boſoms:—I have labour'd
Thirty long years, and in that time, unravell'd
The windings of the ſex.

ALBERT.

No more of that;
I do believe thee apt.

SEBASTIAN.

Then let me think.——
When comes th' appointed time for execution?

ALBERT.

It is already paſt; but I, in ſhow
Of mercy for the man, have ſtill delay'd it:
Our laſt accorded grace expires to morrow,
When he muſt die;----the warrant's ſign'd already
And iſſued to the provoſt.

SEBASTIAN.

Good.

ALBERT.

And heaven
Seem ſo to meet my wiſh, that now her ſiſter,
Whom I have ſtill found dang'rous to oppoſe me,
On a ſick bed is laid; therefore, Sebaſtian,
What we may think expedient to be practis'd,
Muſt be reſolv'd on quickly.

SEBASTIAN.

So far well.
Have you addreſs'd the woman?

ALBERT.

Never openly:
I thought to do ſo once, but wav'd my purpoſe,
In fear of a repulſe.—Who's there?

[*a ſervant enters.*]

SERVANT.

Emilia
Craves hearing of your honour.

SEBASTIAN.

Liſt me Albert.——
[*they whiſper.*]——It is the only way.—You underſtand me?

ALBERT.

ALBERT.

Enough, enough.——I'll put it into practice:
When ſhall we meet again?

SEBASTIAN.

At eight. [*goes*

ALBERT.

Farewell.
Go, bid her in:——— [*the ſervant retires.*]
Night ſteals upon the world,
And her attendant, guilt, creeps from his cave,
Ranging o'er half the globe;—bethink thee Albert,
E'er, Tarquin like, thou wound the ſpotleſs honour,
Thou canſt not but adore:—weak ſcruples! hence;
Emilia is my heav'n, and I, by ſtriving
Thus, to poſſeſs the treaſure of her beauty,
Seek only how I may avoid that hell,
Join'd to the fair one's loſs;——no more,—ſhe comes.

ALBERT. EMILIA.

EMILIA.

Honour and health attend the noble Albert.

ALBERT.

Thanks for thy wiſh.—Why com'ſt thou fair one
[hither?

EMILIA.

To plead for my poor huſband, and again
Hear Albert bid me hope.

ALBERT. *Aſide.*

Why, why is this?
Does not the luſtre of her eye, convert

Darkneſs to light?——What kind of guilt's then
mine,
That it courts day, aſſociates with the ſun,
And, to the bright ſuffuſion of his beams,
Turns its broad ſwarthy front!—Why's this, unleſs
I muſt be doubly damn'd?

EMILIA.

What ſays your honour?

ALBERT.

Nothing, but what already I have told you;
It is not I, Emilia;——but the laws,
That take your huſband's life.

EMILIA.

Therefore I come,
Not ſuppliant to thoſe laws, but to compaſſion;
With which, if you are fraught, well worthy are you
Of the great pow'r you hold.

ALBERT.

No more Emilia.

EMILIA.

In kneeling to you for my huſband's life,
To mercy I appeal; and, truſt me Albert,
Compaſſion is an incenſe that mounts higher
Than ever juſtice did; for when we bend
Before the throne of grace, that poſture's due
To one that loves much more to ſpare, than puniſh:—
If our leaſt ſins were to draw down from heav'n
The judgment they deſerve, what would become
Of you, and of us all?——Oh what indeed!

ALBERT. *Aſide.*

I'll ſpeak my mind at once;—yet how to do it?

EMILIA.

I would you were a woman, and knew only
What ſorrows I muſt feel.—Good, good my lord;
Look on my tears and pity my diſtreſſes;
See where I kneel;—reverſe the doom of death,
That's on my huſband paſt;—his crime is ſmall,
And many a one there is, that lives in honour,
Deeper in guilt than he;——then ſpare him, ſpare him,
Though only to repent.

ALBERT.

Why do you aſk
That, which I will not do?—Nay, if I would,
What is not in my power.—Be ſatisfied.

EMILIA.

Firſt be you merciful;——and 'twere as eaſy,
(Much, much more ſo) for Albert to ſhew pity,
When at the law's ſtern frown, he might deſtroy,
Than for Emilia to be ſatisfied,
Torn from her huſband's arms.

ALBERT.

No more.—I'm fix'd.

EMILIA.

Good heav'n why ſo?——if you are fix'd my lord,
To take his forfeit life; you manifeſt
Your perſon and high poſt aſſailable
By fears that have no name.—Jove's bird, that builds
Upon the cedar's top,—dreads ſhe the wren?

If ev'ry puny bird that beats the air,
Could, with its little beak and feeble wing,
Bear terror to her neſt, ſhe would not be
The empreſs that ſhe is.

ALBERT.

Have done; have done,
You do but pray in vain.

EMILIA.

In her laſt moments,
Hark what my ſiſter ſays, "For noble Albert,
"Will I tire heaven, if he but ſpares a brother."
Oh then take heed, and force her not to curſe you.

ALBERT.

I am not to be mov'd.——he dies to morrow.

EMILIA. *Going.*

Then grant me patience heav'n!——long live your honour.

ALBERT.

Where art thou going?

EMILIA.

Firſt to ſee my huſband:—
Where next, I know not yet.

ALBERT. *Aſide.*

Her tears inflame
The heat of my deſires.———What grief is this,
That it ſubdues all pity in my breaſt,
And ſtirs the ſenſe alone!

EMILIA. *Still going.*

Long live you happy.

ALBERT.

What!—not a word,—not one—to leave behind you,
For your poor huſband's life?

EMILIA.

I muſt not hope it.

ALBERT.

Had I on this ſide death, a gem ſo dear,
As Julio is to you, when I to ſave him,
Came with my earneſt pray'rs, denial ſhould not
Deter me from my theme; I would purſue it,
Nor on weak words reſt all my hopes of gaining
That which I begg'd,——I would *do* ſomething
[likewiſe.

EMILIA.

What can I do, alas?

ALBERT.

Is it my fault,
If he ſhould find a grave?——but you will ſay
I've told you, I am fix'd?—I have.——But this
B'ing cruelty in me,—you too were cruel,
Taking me at my word.

EMILIA.

Oh ſpeak again
Theſe accents of reproof:——they're muſic to me.

ALBERT.

Then, to diſmiſs your ſorrows, know Emilia,
There is ſtill one way left you, which purſuing;
Your huſband's life is ſafe.——I will ſpeak plainly,
Since I well know the great, great love you bear him,
Will,

Will, or you are not worth a thought, draw from you
All you poſſeſs;——No matter, what its value;
He is much dearer ſtill.———What I would mean
Is,——for I pity you,——and pity Julio,——
Is,———[*Aſide*] How to ſpeak it?

EMILIA.

Wherefore pauſes Albert?

ALBERT.

Emilia thou haſt beauty.———To ſpeak plainer,
Know that I love you.

EMILIA.

Love me?

ALBERT.

Yes Emilia,
And in your longing arms, the forfeit Julio,
I will replace, if you, to night, will grant
The thing, I would not name.

EMILIA.

I have no anſwer.

ALBERT.

By heav'n, I ſwear I will; and thus, Emilia,
Thus, let me ſeal my vow.

EMILIA.

Monſter avaunt!—
Compaſſion now I ſcorn.——Mercy from thee,
Can only prove a curſe.

ALBERT.

Comes it to this?
Then hear me out, and if that thing—your ſex
Call modeſty,—a falſe, tho' boaſted virtue,——

Will

Will ſuffer you,——be wiſe :——either conſent
To yield that treaſure up, which I am ſet on,
Or, by my ſoul, he dies :——the world itſelf
Shall not extend his life beyond the morning,
If, with thy beauty, thou refuſe to bleſs me :
Therefore look to't ;—go to him ;—I have ſworn it.

EMILIA.

Then muſt he die !

ALBERT. *Returning.*

Another thing take heed of.
Poſſeſs no ſoul with knowledge of this ſecret,
As you regard your huſband's life and ſafety,
Which yet, you may obtain :—if I once hear,
(Tho' many ways I have, to render harmleſs
The ſcandal of report) that you have broach'd
The tale of my diſhonour, be aſſur'd,
That moment is his laſt ;—once more, look to it.

EMILIA. *Alone.*

Henceforward, let no truth or honour, paſs
Unnotic'd of ſuſpicion.—This vile Albert
Calls into queſtion and deſerv'd diſtruſt,
The worth of his whole ſex.——Oh Julio, Julio !
This, this was thy dear friend !——apoſtacy,
Back to the fiend, and boaſt thy triumph to him.—
Yet can it be ?——ſure, I am loſt in error !——
Was it *his* fault or mine ?——he could not ſurely
So all at once revolt, but that the ſight
Of my pernicious beauty, as he call'd it,
Firſt puſh'd him to th' offence.——If I thought that,
I'd on myſelf,—Oh vengeance !——Julio——Julio.

SCENE

SCENE II. A *priſon.*

JULIO. FRIAR,

FRIAR.

Son, by the ſacred habit of my order,
You have had juſtice; therefore, as you value
The ſafety of your ſoul, addreſs you quickly
To entertain your fate.

JULIO.

My holy father,
Is it a ſin to hope?——Why will you urge
That fearful thing, call'd death, ſo often to me?

FRIAR.

To arm you for the worſt; ſo, fearing death,
Shall unexpected life, with greater comfort,
Greet your ſad boſom; or to-morrow's ſentence,
Not yet repeal'd, be robb'd of half its terrors;
Since, if the counſel of my love, you follow,
Conſcience, with all the keenneſs of upbraiding,
In your laſt moments ſhall not find occaſion
Thus to exclaim "Now ſee what deſperation
"Waits on ſecurity."——be wiſe and ſhun it.

JULIO. FRIAR. EMILIA.

JULIO.

I will not think of it.——my wife!

EMILIA.

Oh Julio!

JULIO.

JULIO.

What is the news?——what comfort doſt thou
bring me?

EMILIA.

Oh! I ſhall go diſtracted with my ſorrows!

JULIO.

What means this wild diſorder?——why Emilia,
Twine thy fond arms about me? why this terror
In thy affrighted looks?

EMILIA.

I cannot ſpeak.

JULIO.

Tell me at once, is there no comfort for me?

EMILIA.

Cruel reply, which yet, I muſt deliver.

JULIO.

Does Albert then forget?

EMILIA.

Name not the villain.

FRIAR.

Daughter be pacified.—Your ſorrow makes you,
Utter you know not what.

EMILIA.

Away with counſel;
Hell has no flame whoſe fury equals that
Which rages in my breaſt.——

JULIO.

Still, ſtill what mean you?
Speak not in riddles thus, for I am arm'd
To undergo the worſt.——Suſpence is torture.——

What

What, will you whiſper me?—A moment, pleaſe you
Good father, to retire;——I'll ſpeak a word,
In private to my wife, and ſoon will haſte
To have your ghoſtly comfort and inſtruction.

FRIAR.

I ſhall attend you in the anti-chamber.

JULIO. EMILIA.

JULIO.

There look, to ſee me ſtraight:—and now Emilia,
What from my friend? When laſt I ſpoke his name,
I think thou call'dſt him villain:—if he merits
Th' addition which thou gav'ſt him,—heav'n have mercy
Upon the beſt of us:——What may I hope?

EMILIA.

Think not of hope:——you breathe your laſt to-[morrow;
Therefore prepare.

JULIO.

Oh let me ever fold thee
In my expiring arms: thou'rt all in all
The treaſure of my ſoul.——one friend I had,
Who Judas like, deceives, forſakes, betrays me,
And only thou art left——then tell me,—can I
Oh! can I part with thee?

EMILIA.

Thou muſt—and quickly.

JULIO.

To-morrow ſaid'ſt thou not?

EMILIA.

EMILIA.

To-morrow Julio;

Yet———

JULIO.

Yet?——What yet?——That word
[brings ſudden comfort
To my ſad heart.——light, to the blind man, comes
Leſs welcome than that *yet*.—tell, tell me quickly,
Is there a glimpſe of hope that I may live?

EMILIA.

Yes, thou *may'ſt* live;—but oh!—the hard, hard
ranſom!

JULIO.

Why am I held in doubt?—What is the purchaſe?

EMILIA.

Wouldſt thou believe it!

JULIO.

Still I'm on the rack——

EMILIA.

Th' infringement of that vow, which, when we
[married,
Bound me for ever yours!

JULIO.

He could not aſk it!
What!—from the ſeat of juſtice!—no—he could not,
(Thou haſt miſtaken quite)—he could not fall
Into ſuch horrid guilt.——The loyalty
Which to my bed you owe!—it is impoſſible.

EMILIA.

Oh that it were not true——

JULIO.

The noble Albert!—
Then virtue's ſelf is falſe and none are honeſt:
It is reſolv'd——I'll die—

EMILIA.

And canſt thou leave me?

JULIO.

If I could not, wouldſt thou conſent to ſave me?

EMILIA.

Oh no, no, no;——and yet—fearful conceit!——
'Tis terrible to die.

JULIO.

Do not appal me
On the pit's brink, with theſe imaginations.

EMILIA.

To part with thee!—

JULIO.

Ah—death and parting, ſaidſt [thou!

EMILIA.

Horrible both!

JULIO.

True—true——to die, means ſome- [thing
Which the ſoul ſhudders at, and the firm boſom,
(Firm in all dangers elſe) recoils to think of.
And then to part!——terrible word Emilia!
Is there beyond the grave, a hell of horror
Equal to that?——Oh my good angel ſave me;—
Save me;——for ſoon the fearful gulph will open,
Dooming my ſoul to everlaſting terrors.

JULIO.

JULIO. EMILIA. SEBASTIAN.

SEBASTIAN.

Your pardon for this ſudden interruption:
Something I bring of moment from lord Albert
Which will rejoice you both——'tis to Emilia——
Read and be happy.————What is't moves you lady?

EMILIA. *Throwing away the paper.*

Back to the dev'l thou ſerv'ſt, and let him know
His threatnings are in vain:—we'll die together.

SEBASTIAN.

What may this mean?——good manners, by your leave
Once in my life. [*takes up and pretends to read the paper.*]

EMILIA.

The tyrant,—(ſwift deſtruction——
Oh I could curſe, if heav'n would hear my curſes.)
Commands me by that paper to be ſpeedy
In my reſolve, or at the hour of midnight
Shalt thou be dragg'd to death.

JULIO.

Remorſeleſs villain!
What gets he by this threat?——thinks he to grind,
When he conceives I ſhall perſuade thee to it,
Compliance from my fears:——could he ev'n add
Years to my nat'ral life——his cruel mercy
I would diſdain, in tenderneſs of that
A thouſand times more dear.——I mean thy honour.

SEBASTIAN.

Hear me wrong'd lady. I diſclaim all knowledge
Of this vile paper; my unhappy ſtars
Have planted me near Albert,——whom I now
Have equal cauſe with you, to call a villain——
His ſervant, not his friend:——had I but known
The meaning of this note, which I conceiv'd
To be another reſpite, theſe my arms
Should have firſt rotted off, e'er they had thus
Inſulted your diſtreſs.

EMILIA.

It may be ſo.

SEBASTIAN.

If you diſtruſt, me ſtill——I bind myſelf
By any honeſt method, to revenge
Your wrongs upon his head, and nothing elſe
Aſk in return, but that which I may merit;
Thanks of you both, for your own ſafety will
Your ſecrecy inſure.

EMILIA.

There is no way,
I fear, to our redreſs.

SEBASTIAN.

Know *you* of any?

JULIO.

Did but the duke——

SEBASTIAN.

Nay, nay, you muſt not think
One moment of the duke.——You have no witneſs?
Nothing but this? which may not be his writing.——
Where's

Where's then your cauſe?——you muſt ſeek out,—
believe me,
Some better courſe than this, or bid at once
Good night to your revenge;—beſides, lord Albert,
High as the duke has plac'd him, would gain credit
Saying it is not ſo.——tell me but this:—
If he ſhould urge your letter has been forg'd,
How would you prove it his?

JULIO *embracing* Emilia.

Oh how indeed.

SEBASTIAN.

This is improper now. [*pauſing.*] ——I have a
thought
Juſt come acroſs my brain.———Let me intreat you
Leave us alone awhile;———aſk me not why,
Leſt you ſpoil all.——I have no honeſty,
Unleſs I ſerve you here.——go in——delay not.

JULIO.

Her honour being unblemiſh'd, you ſhall find me
Willing to live.

EMILIA. SEBASTIAN.

SEBASTIAN.

He loves you much, and therefore,
Tell me——it is a queſtion of much import——
Were it a ſin, on any terms to ſave him?

EMILIA.

What may'ſt thou mean by that?

SEBASTIAN.

That Heav'n—Emilia—
Muſt be too good, with puniſhment to follow
So merciful a ſin—if ſin, you think it,
Saving a huſband's life.

EMILIA.

I would die for him.—
But wherefore kill my ſoul?

SEBASTIAN.

You would not kill it;
Being, as you are, compell'd to the tranſgreſſion.

EMILIA.

Hence from my boſom ye unhallow'd thoughts,
That to temptation lead.——A life preſerv'd,
And lengthen'd by my ſhame, were hateful to him.
Had he deſir'd to live, why did he not
Perſuade me to the deed?

SEBASTIAN.

You judge not well——
There is no man that holds ſo light his honour
As to do that; though where's the wretch now living,
Who would not thank his being's kind preſerver
Taking the gift with joyfulneſs, if purchas'd
Tho' on hard terms—yet ſuch, as to his knowledge
Never could come?—do but ſuppoſe that Julio
Were in *your* place, and you bleſs'd with a conſort
Loving and lov'd.—would you not take with joy
The life ſhe might preſerve, by that—— (a ſlip

Call

Call it at worſt)——which to perſuade her to,
Yourſelf breath'd not a word?

EMILIA.

My huſband ſir,
As all who have that name ſhould be,—heav'n made
Protector of my honour;——and if he
Give up his life by choice, my duty ſays,
On terms of ſhame, I ought not to preſerve it.

SEBASTIAN.

This argues virtue in you, but ſuch virtue
As carries you too far——how, if he found,
That to redeem his life, you 'ad caſt away
A jewel beyond price; than which, friends, riches,
Health, country, wealth and pleaſure are not dearer.
Would not he ſtand, by all the laws of nature,
Bound to your love?—alas! it is in friendſhip
That I proceed thus far.——I would not have
Two creatures caſt away.

EMILIA.

Tempt me no more.

SEBASTIAN.

I tempt you for your good:—beſides, think lady,
Your huſband—for his ſoul—ſo much he loves you,
Could not reveal his wiſh.—he could not ſay
"Loſe ſomething for my gain"——Oh will you then
Come ſhort of him in love?——have pity on him;
Leſt, in the pangs of an untimely death,
His diſcontented ſoul complain, that Albert
Was more inclin'd to ſave him than Emilia.

EMILIA.

To err upon compulſion, and offend
Of our own will, are crimes—but yet, I hope,
Crimes of no kin.

SEBASTIAN.

I'm glad to ſee you coming:——
What you ſhall do, to ſave your huſband's life,
Weigh'd with all crimes, of ev'ry other nature,
Loſes the name of ſin.

EMILIA.

If it were ſo————

SEBASTIAN.

Then too revenge?——if he muſt die, Emilia,
Where wilt thou gain redreſs?—ſhall Albert triumph
Unpuniſh'd, in this act?—nay more:—what virtue
Shall ſcreen thee from his power?——who knows,
——what arts,
The villain may employ!—what mighty engines
Put into uſe,——if, bent upon enjoyment,
Thy beauty urge him on.——Think then, Emilia,
Should it be ſo——as thou muſt fall before 'em,
Thy virtue's loſt in vain.

EMILIA.

Thou haſt wak'd my fears——
I ſee the danger now;————final deſtruction
Fall on his head;————I am, at laſt, perſuaded.

SEBASTIAN.

This now, is as it ſhould be; and I'm happy—
All ſhall go well;————I will call in your huſ-
band——

But

But madam—to conceal your reſolution,—
Say as I ſay.

EMILIA.

I ſhall obey your counſel.

SEBASTIAN.

Julio;—my friend;—come in, thou man of ſorrow.

EMILIA. SEBASTIAN. JULIO.

SEBASTIAN.

Bid farewell to your wife.——An hour e'er midnight
Wait our return, and with us too, your pardon,
If from Lord Albert, upon terms of honour,
That pardon may be had:————I have a mind
That's flatter'd with ſtrong hope;—but if we fail—
(I think we cannot fail)——the time will then
Be ſoon enough to part.

EMILIA.

Till then, my Julio,
Heav'n be thy ſtay and reſt thou ſatisfied
To ſave thy life,—(howe'er 'tis precious to me)—
Thy bed ſhall not be wrong'd.

JULIO.

Farewell—farewell.—
Swift move ye moments, till we meet again.

SCENE III. *The houſe of* Albert.

ALBERT.

There was a time once, when a woman's tears
Would have ſubdu'd my nature to lament
Upon the piteous cauſe.——Why am I then

So in a moment chang'd?——can the fall'n angel
Mate with a cherub?——who denies it,—let him
Look but on me, who, from another's goodneſs,
Loſt to all good myſelf, can glean no maxim
Save that the thing I covet in her beauty,
Sets more my ſenſe in flame; for oh,—Emilia,—
Let the winds hear it not, but 'tis thy virtue,
Heightens the charms, which make my longing ſoul
Sick for enjoyment: had the fiend, who lays
Temptation in my path, perverted firſt
Thy footſtep from the way of female virtue,
Thou wert not worth purſuit.——here comes my
villain.

ALBERT. SEBASTIAN.

ALBERT.

My oracle what hope can'ſt thou vouchſafe me?
Haſt thou ſucceeded?

SEBASTIAN.

Look ſir, and be certain.

ALBERT. *Looking out.*

This is ſucceſs indeed!————I will not loſe
A moment of my bliſs.————meantime Sebaſtian,
Go to the priſon you, and free the huſband.

SEBASTIAN.

Be not ſo haſty ſir.——Your paſſion blinds you.
Prudence forbid that ſtep!

ALBERT.

Why—what's the matter?

SEBASTIAN.

You know not what you ſay.—enlarge the huſband!
Are you well ſir?

ALBERT.

ALBERT.

I am aware you'll tell me
We have not his conſent;——but let that be——
It will be better ſo.

SEBASTIAN.

'Twill *not* be better.——
My lord, I muſt be bold.——ſhall Julio live
To 'venge the wrong you put upon Emilia,
Knowing her ſhame?—off with his head e'er morning
Nor let him live to hear the tale recounted
Of the paſt night, that ſtamps diſgrace upon him.

ALBERT.

But then my word?——if Julio dies, I break it;
I'm by my promiſe bound.

SEBASTIAN.

My lord believe me,
Here lies your choice——either ſuppreſs your flame
Or ſo diſpoſe of Julio, that his vengeance
May never dog your ſteps.——Give me your ring;
I'll bear it to the goal, and be myſelf,
The harbinger of his fate:——within this hour
Expect me on the rear of your delight,
With news of Julio's death.

ALBERT.

When it is known,
'Twill drive Emilia mad.

SEBASTIAN.

What's that you?——
I cannot hide my warmth, to mark your paſſion;
How, like a frozen ſtream, it is bound up

With

With fooliſh doubts and fears.—grant ſhe go mad—
As there's great hope ſhe will :——what cauſe have you
To be in pain for that ?——when you have taſted
What your ſoul longs for, let her rot or periſh
By any fearful way :———you've gain'd your end,
And have no more to wiſh.

ALBERT.

I mean Sebaſtian——

SEBASTIAN.

Come—come no more.———--either you love her not
Or fearing to do that, which may ſecure you,
Merit her not.———--In me, love's lamp hath nearly
Burnt to the ſnuff,———yet as I am———— believe me,
Drawn by a thread ſo ſtrong—I could do wonders
To compaſs my deſires.

ALBERT.

I cannot think
'Twere good to deal in blood.

SEBASTIAN.

You're young, and danger
Should prompt to the deed——ſo the atchieve-[ment,
Dowr'd with the hazard, brings the more of rapture,
Which, if with eaſe obtain'd, were like a bauble,
Always in reach, and courting your acceptance,
Valued at nought.

ALBERT.

What of the duke ?

SEBAS-

SEBASTIAN.

To him
Grant ſhe complain;———is there no way;—no method;
Juſt or unjuſt, to undermine her falſhood,
Making it ſeem ſo?

ALBERT.

We will think upon it.——
Hold:——take my ſeal:——diſpatch:——and tell the provoſt,
That on the ſight of it, Emilia's huſband
Be born to inſtant death.———To death!——what ſaid I?
Is it my friend;——the huſband of Emilia,
Whom I thus doom——

SEBASTIAN.

My lord——

ALBERT.

But I'm determin'd.——
Neceſſity and choice both ſpur me on
To the full harveſt where my joys are blowing:
Take then the token ſtraight—and ſtay Sebaſtian:—
The man provided for, our cares muſt turn
Upon the woman next.

SEBASTIAN.

Leave that to me——

ALBERT.

E'er midnight you'll return?

SEBAS-

SEBASTIAN.

Expect to see me
Near on that hour.

SEBASTIAN. *Alone.*

Now I'm alone, and fit
For thought and meditation.———When I first
Embark'd on this design, the profit of it
Made me begin; not dreaming that the virtue
Of a weak woman, which I've now experienc'd,
(Thinking with eaſe, ſhe'd ſwallow the temptation
To a ſweet ſin,) would make this after action
Spring from neceſſity.——'twas that deceiv'd me:
Yet am I in, and what muſt not now be practis'd,
Pleads ſelf defence, or elſe diſcov'ry follows
Cloſe on the heel.——That's comfort for the con-
[ſcience:
But I delay too long————what Julio ſtays for.

ACT II.

SCENE I. *The Country, with a diſtant view of the City of* Padua.

The DUKE *as entering to a Tent, followed by his* ATTENDANTS.

DUKE.

THIS is a pleaſant ſpot:—here will we reſt;
And, look you my good lords, to-morrow's ſun
No earlier ſhall be up, but we will out
And hie us to the chace.——How ſays the map?
What is the diſtance from our court to this?

ATTENDANT.

Full three and twenty miles; and yonder ſpires,
Whit'ning beneath the moon,—as I conceive it—
Riſe within Padua's walls.———To Venice thence,
In the way hither are ten leagues exact.

DUKE.

'Tis a fine night!———what diſmal ſound was that!

ATTENDANT.

That, my good lord!———

DUKE.

Hark———now it ſtrikes again.

ATTEND.

ATTENDANT.

Nothing my lord; but that to night, at Padua,
One of the wealthieſt burghers dies for treaſon.
Juſt now return'd from thence, my ſervant Louis,
Whom I ſent thither, to procure ſubſiſtence
While we ſtay here, reports that the commandant
Fearing a reſcue,——e'er he left the city,—
Order'd thus late at night his execution.

DUKE.

When ſet your ſervant out?

ATTENDANT.

At eight——and ſcarcely
Is the hour waſted, ſince he quitted Padua.——
Why looks your grace thus ſad?

DUKE.

That man you ſpeak of
Was my dear friend.—From Albert, have his treaſons
Come to my ear; and though I knew already
How his life ſtood, a forfeiture to juſtice;
Yet did I think his death more diſtant from him
Than it now proves; for our commandant often,
Loving the man, hath ſtill delay'd his ſentence;
Which he would now, but that for reaſons—doubt-
[leſs,
Full of much import,—he withholds the mercy;
Therefore it was, the tidings damp'd my ſpirits.

ATTENDANT.

Something of this, your grace hath talk'd already.

DUKE.

DUKE.

He hath a lady too;—a kind and fair one;—
Whoſe goodneſs I may dwell on, tho' I never
Can ſpeak of it enough——I knew ſhe lov'd him,
And, in his death, will ſuffer much affliction.———
Would for her ſake, that I had ſtaid his ſentence.

ATTENDANT.

This weighs too much upon you.

DUKE.

I'll write to her,
And, in ſome ſort to mitigate her ſorrows,
Tender the comforts which my court may give her;
Friends and ſociety; and this, I may do,
Since I have known her long:——it was myſelf,
That help'd her to her huſband.——For this preſent,
To ev'ry one good night.—Reſt may wear off
My heavineſs of heart.

ATTENDANT.

Elſe 'twere a pity,
Coming thus far, to have the country's pleaſures.

DUKE.

Three days we'll here encamp, and then ſteal home
As private as we came; nor, ſhall our nobles,
Know we've been abſent———once again, good ev'ning———
I will to reſt.-——Appoint ſome guard till morning,
For you well know, what thieves infeſt the foreſt.

ATTENDANT.

Doubt not our care my lord, we will be watchful.

SCENE

SCENE II. The *ſtreet*.

JULIO. FRIAR. PROVOST. OFFICERS. *In proceſſion to execution:——behind them* SEBASTIAN *with* SPECTATORS.

PROVOST.

Room for the pris'ner there.

JULIO.

Good father, hear me.

FRIAR.

Patience my ſon;—ſpeak not, for you muſt die.

JULIO.

Heav'ns you are juſt!—if thus *my* ſins you viſit,
Shall Albert 'ſcape your wrath?

SPECTATOR *to* Sebaſtian.

How's that?—what ſays he?

SEBASTIAN.

Marry ſir this:———he hath of late, in priſon;
Which, to deal charitably with th' offender,
I muſt believe the conſequence of madneſs;
Glanc'd at the governor, accus'd his honour
Of tamp'ring with the virtue of his wife
And the delirious fit, ſtill ſtrong within him,
He's railing at him now.

SPECTATOR.

Why ſhould he ſo?

JULIO.

JULIO.

How dreadfully that bell tolls!——————hear me heav'n;
Sleep not upon my wrongs; but of your vengeance
Let Albert bear his part.——————Upon my knees,
I make it my laſt pray'r,

FRIAR.

Prophane and impious!

PROVOST.

Be not offended.——————If 'tis madneſs in him
As I believe no leſs,——————your pious cenſures
Fall uſeleſs to the ground.

FRIAR.

I'm ſorry for him.

PROVOST.

Headſman, a word with you.

SEBASTIAN *to the* Spectators.

A likely ſtory!——
Who will believe it?——has the brave commandant,
No more deſerv'd, than to be thus ill treated
By an aſſaſſin's tongue, who, ſuff'ring juſtly,
Speaks what he liſts.

SPECTATOR.

If he be mad, the fault
Pardons itſelf.——————Will you walk on, or tarry
Here in the preſs?

SEBASTIAN.

A moment, and I'm with you.

JULIO.

Is there no friend?—no pity?—no compaſſion?
But you muſt all become my ſworn deſtroyers!——
Wretched Emilia!—little art thou conſcious
Of this unhappy hour!—how wilt thou weep,
Root up thy hair and ſmite upon thy boſom;
At thy return from Albert's loath'd embraces,
Seeing me dead!——ſtretch'd out a coarſe before thee——
Senſeleſs and cold!——heav'n!——what a wretch is Julio!
If, as too much I fear, by love directed,
Thou haſt loſt that, which worlds could not have purchas'd!——
Horrible thought!———off off ye hind'ring fetters,
That I may tear theſe limbs with very anguiſh;
And to my heart dig deep a ſpacious paſſage,
That like a pris'ner, bound in a dark dung'on,
Pants to be free.

FRIAR.

Author of mercies, quickly
Viſit this wretch with comfort, and apply
Peace to his heart.

JULIO.

Weep to behold me ſaid I?——
Never——oh no——in bitterneſs of ſorrow,
Will ſhe not rather (whilſt her ſharp upbraidings
Reach ev'n my grave, and make that bed uneaſy)
Say this is he——the cauſe——th' accurſed cauſe

Of

Of his wife's ſhame?——what comfort will it bring her
That my conſent was wanting to her ruin?
Still I have been the cauſe.——To ſhare my fortune,
Her kindred and her country ſhe forſook
Marrying me here.——This curſe had never happen'd
Being no wife of mine.——Will no one looſe me?
That with theſe deſp'rate hands I may invade
The region of my heart——and the poor martyr
Pluck out at once—for now, I die by inches.

FRIAR.

Oh wretched period!—gracious heav'n reſtore him.

JULIO.

Peace—father peace.—I am not mad tho' miſerable.
——Would—would I were.

SEBASTIAN *to the* Spectators.

What Sirs, now judge you of him?

FRIAR.

The time of death draws nigh; think how to meet it.

JULIO.

Where is my wife?

PROVOST.

I'm ſorry,—but Emilia.
Is no where to be found.

JULIO.

From Albert fetch her——
His purpoſe is fulfill'd and I muſt ſee her.

PROVOST.

She went not back to Albert from the priſon.

JULIO.

Provoſt ſhe did——————you are all leagu'd againſt me————

She's with him now————————good Gods what could induce me

To part with her!————————I was deluded—forc'd

Into the fatal ſtep, by one whom Albert

Sent to deceive me.——Curſes on my folly!——

How could I let her go!————————Oh I could ſtrip

This cov'ring from my bones!————————drag Albert hither;—

Bring too his vile aſſociate and I'll daſh them,

Both on the earth, as Hercules did Lichas;

Where, to a rock transform'd;—with mad'ning fury,

Beating my head againſt their flinty boſoms,

Will I at once find death.

PROVOST.

Force him away.

JULIO.

Where is my wife?——this inſtant bring her to me——

See her I will;—I muſt;—or, by the hopes

I entertain of bliſs, I will not die

Unleſs you kill me here.

FRIAR.

Have patience.

JULIO.

Patience!

Hence with the word—I muſt and will behold her—

If

If you deny me, I will do————I know not
How far my rage and my deſpair may drive me——
But I'll have vengeance————bring her therefore to me,
Or, by my ſoul's ſalvation, I will rather
Suffer wild horſes, to disjoint and tear me,
Than kneel down to the block.

PROVOST.

You muſt—you muſt.

FRIAR.

Son—as a father, to his child, juſt plunging
Into a pit, would run and ſnatch him from it—
So let me thee:——This guilty raving ſilence,
And upon heav'n call inſtantly for pardon.

JULIO.

Shall I not barely ſee her?

FRIAR.

Never——therefore
Arm you for death; and, wiſhing to find mercy
In your laſt moments, cenſure not lord Albert,
Who is too good, to fall into damnation
By ſuch a horrid courſe.

JULIO.

Oh father, father!
Pity the woes I feel——and thou Emilia,
Lay not to my account thy loſs of honour;——
Loſt for my ſake————might but my death redeem it;
This head, I would lay down, as, on his pillow,
Sinks the tir'd traveller, when his bed receives him;

And, with th' impatience of a bridegroom's paſſion,
Chide the ſlow hour, and think death long approaching.

PROVOST.

On there.

JULIO.

One moment more, and I obey you:
Provoſt—when I am dead—give thou this ring
To my unhappy wife———ſay when I ſent it
I was juſt going to make full atonement
For the deep wrong, which—but for me, had never
Fall'n on her ſpotleſs name—tell her, theſe eyes—
Which—were ſhe here——ſhe would behold now rivetted
Faſt to the earth—have ſhut bright daylight out,
And clos'd their ſelves in death.

PROVOST.

This ſhall ſhe know.——
[*Aſide to the Friar.*] Bear with me ſir——I ſoothe him in his frenzy,
To a good end.

JULIO.

From Padua too;—this city——
Where,—as contracted in a narr'wer circle—
Springs every vice, that grows in ev'ry climate——
Bid her be gone; nor vainly hope for juſtice
In a corrupted age——where———long as heav'n
Bids not earth open, to receive the guilty;
Nor, from his throne, conſuming fire come down,

Whole

Whole nations to conſume——the lawleſs ruffian
Muſt triumph in his crimes.——Charge her to fly
The public haunts of men;——devote her ſoul
To heav'n and pray'r in ſilence and retirement.——
Bid to all paſt delights, a long farewell;
And ceaſe to mingle, with a laughing world,
That ſcoff and jeer at virtue in misfortunes.

PROVOST.

This will I do moſt faithfully.

JULIO.

Then all
I can perform, I have——lead on.——Emilia
Muſt I ne'er ſee thee more?——to view thy face
And take a laſt farewell, had ſweeten'd death——
That would not have been much——oh me!—my heart!—
My breaking heart!—bear yet a little more——
Then ceaſe thy anguiſh, and for ever reſt.

SCENE III. The *priſon*.

EMILIA.

I have no buſineſs—guilty as I am—
To thruſt myſelf into conviction's path,
And give each ſtone a tongue that may proclaim
How greatly I have ſinn'd——alas!—alas!—
There is no need of evidence without
Whilſt conſcience lives within——yet, have I ſav'd

My dear, dear Julio's life :———upon my knees,
To heav'n I bend for that—nor will I murmur
At the juſt puniſhment myſelf muſt ſuffer,
Since—to the man whom my ſoul loves—I'm made
The inſtrument of good.——What ſacred horror
Comes in that ſound!——ſome poor afflicted ſpirit,
Quitting it's clay, has from a bed of ſickneſs,
Wing'd it's flight hence.———With what a purchaſe, Julio,
Have I averted thine!——all ſilent——ſleep
Has ſurely ſtole upon him!———oh!—when next,
I woo thee to my lids———who is't approaches?———
The grave ſhall be my bed—the turf my pillow :
There will be reſt indeed!———

EMILIA. PROVOST.

EMILIA.

No noiſe—he's ſleeping.
When did you leave him?

PROVOST.

Julio, mean you madam?

EMILIA.

Whom ſhould I mean beſides?—my huſband—provoſt—
Why do you look amaz'd?—is't not a queſtion?—
When did you leave him?——ſpeak.

PROVOST.

Alas Emilia!
He is no more.

EMILIA.

EMILIA.

No more!——what mean you provoſt?—

PROVOST.

Sorry I am, to bring you theſe ill tidings
Which, from my ſoul I ſwear, would give me pleaſure
Were they not true.————But—to confirm them fully——
Look on this ring.

EMILIA.

That ring!———let me behold it——
Merciful heav'n!——this ring was his—I know it—
Yet—what of that?—let me be more perſuaded.

[*She departs haſtily.*]

PROVOST.

I am amaz'd——her griefs are ſtrong and many—
Something ſhe means, which muſt be ſtraight pre-[vented.

EMILIA. *Returning.*

He's gone indeed; but, whither have they born him?
Nay——hide it not.

PROVOST.

Why this to me Emilia?
I'm guiltleſs of his death.

EMILIA.

He is not dead————
You do not uſe me well, to join with thoſe
That laugh at my diſtreſs————how ſhould he die?

PROVOST.

PROVOST.

I pity you indeed——becauſe I fear,
You have been much abus'd; but, Madam——
truſt me,—
I ſhould eſteem it ſin, by coining falſehoods,
To trifle with your pain:—the curfew ringing,
By Albert's ſpecial order, he was led
To execution.————Dying,—he pronounc'd
Moſt tenderly your name, and the laſt word
He faulter'd, was Emilia.

EMILIA.

Heav'n ſupport me!
The tale, this man relates, has poiſon in it
And I am ſick to death———why let it come,
I have deſerv'd to die.———Some horrid end,
Some kind of death that has no precedent
Mark'd on the liſt of murder, ſhould my hand
Inflict upon my crimes——ſlight puniſhment!
Unequal to the guilt.

PROVOST.

Retire within.

EMILIA. *After a pauſe.*

I like that juſtice well———I have a ſword,
Which yet, I did not mean to uſe ſo early:
But, ſince it muſt be ſo [*feeling in her boſom*]——oh
here it is———
Come forth and be diſcharg'd.

PROVOST.

Upon my knee———

EMILIA.

EMILIA. *Ravingly.*

Nay 'tis too late———remember, once I knelt
But found no mercy——tyrant!—now will I
Be cruel in my turn———where is my huſband?—
Hark ruffian——I will make the name of Albert
Dreadful to future treach'ry!———ev'ry villain,
Thinking on thee——come forth——come forth
[*drawing out her dagger.*]—ſhall quake
As at the doom's day bar.

PROVOST. *Wrenching away the dagger.*

Defend me heav'n!——
Give me the ſword——what deſp'rate deed,—raſh woman,
You nearly had perform'd!

EMILIA.

I am to blame———
I ſee it though too late.

PROVOST.

If you have loſt
The thing you held moſt dear——I took it not—
He fell by courſe of law and 'tis unjuſt
To wreck your griefs on me.

EMILIA.

Oh grant me pardon---
My loſs hath made me mad———I took you ſir,
For him that hath deluded me, beyond
Th' example of all villains———give me back
That inſtrument you have:———upon my knee
I beg it of you.

PROVOST.

PROVOST.

To what purpoſe, madam?

SEBASTIAN. *Within.*

Ho——in the priſon here——where is the provoſt?

PROVOST.

I hear one calling me.——Go in Emilia——
Let me intreat you, do: within——who's waiting?---
[*to a ſervant who comes in.*] Conduct this
gentlewoman to my ſiſter——
Let her want nothing.——Stay not; but away---
You ſhall be look'd to well.

PROVOST. *Alone.*

Now by my life
This is moſt ſtrange!——what it can mean,
I know not——
Time will unravel all.

PROVOST. SEBASTIAN.

SEBASTIAN.

From Albert ſir,
This letter is addreſs'd.

PROVOST.

I know the writing well.

[*He reads.*] "Our pleaſure is, that Emilia, who
"ſtands charg'd with plotting our death, be
"detained in proper cuſtody; whereof fail
"not, as you will anſwer the contrary at
"your peril.

"ALBERT."

PROVOST.

PROVOST.

I ſhall obey———the pris'ner is within;
As I muſt call her now———would you believe
it?——
This dagger I wrench'd from her, or ſhe had
Done ſomething bloody on me.

SEBASTIAN.

Heav'n forbid it!—
[*aſide*] I have a uſe for this.

PROVOST.

Go in with me:
You ſhall hear more, anon.

SEBASTIAN.

I am griev'd for her.
'Tis a dark world, we live in.——God forgive her—
I could not have believ'd it.

PROVOST.

Let's go in——
Her ſpirits are quite ſpent:——ſhe lacks both help,
And neceſſary reſt.

SEBASTIAN.

I could weep for her——
She has deceiv'd me much:—pray God forgive her.
Go in before——I will be with you ſhortly.

SEBASTIAN. *Alone.*

My lord—my lord—come in—Sebaſtian calls you.

SEBASTIAN. ALBERT.

SEBASTIAN.

Fear nothing for not Argus, through this habit,
Could gueſs at what you are.

ALBERT.

ALBERT.

That's well——where was't
We broke off our diſcourſe?———I recollect——
At "mingling with the throng"———'twas there
you finiſh'd.

SEBASTIAN.

I mingled with the throng, and as he paſs'd
To'ards execution, ſpoke to thoſe about me;
And, with a pitying ſhrug, in whiſpers told them,
The criminal was mad:——there needed nothing
To make my words ſeem true, but taking notice
Of the wild ſpeeches; incoherent taunts;
And bitter accuſations, he threw out
Againſt your noble ſelf; which, I requeſted,
They would, in careful oppoſition place,
To the unblemiſh'd carriage of your life;
And then decide theirſelves.

ALBERT.

And ſo he ſuffer'd?

SEBASTIAN.

What mean you by that queſtion?——as I live;
You ſeem to me to ſhake!

ALBERT.

Cruel Sebaſtian,
You have undone me!

SEBASTIAN.

How?——undone you Albert?

ALBERT.

Robb'd me of peace—deſtroy'd my ſoul for ever.—
Tempted my hand to do a deed of horror,

Which,

Which, but to think on now; the door of madneſs
Sits in my view, as op'ning to receive me.

SEBASTIAN.

What do I hear?

ALBERT.

Becauſe, to thy direction
Fool as I was,— I yielded up my reaſon;
Thou haſt the weakneſs of my heart perſuaded——
(And could I yield, juſt heav'n!)——to do——oh
what?——
To murder my dear friend!

SEBASTIAN.

My lord, theſe wav'rings
But ill become a man——if you repent
Of what's already done; and therefore, ſuffer
Fooliſh compunction to poſſeſs your boſom,
I propheſy you're loſt; for there's much more
That muſt be yet perform'd.

ALBERT.

I'll do *no* more:
I have already dipp'd theſe hands in blood,
Which not whole years of penitential deeds,
Shall ever waſh away.——Iſcariot like,
On thy fell counſel, have I took the breath
Of him, who would have loſt it, to redeem
The life of his falſe friend:——and do'ſt thou come
To load me with more guilt?——hadſt thou
been he,
(Of whom thou'rt little ſhort) who, lion like,
Ranges the wide world through, in queſt of ſouls

To

To people his dark realms——thou wouldſt have thought
I'ad ſinn'd enough, to make perdition firm
And tempted me no more.

SEBASTIAN.

Hear me, my lord———

ALBERT.

Thou 'aſt talk'd too much—be henceforth, dumb for ever;
Unleſs thou can'ſt inſtruct me, to do that,
Which may atone the paſt:——look round about;
Thou ſee'ſt me on all ſides hemm'd in by blood—
The blood of a dear friend:——if I ſhould plunge
By ſuch another deed, into the ſtream
Farther than this——the hand of heav'n itſelf
Could never pluck me out.

SEBASTIAN.

Prepoſt'rous whining!
Unworthy ev'n of women!——for Emilia,
When ſhe conſented, for her huſband's life,
To proſtitution's terms,——terms which yourſelf
Had courage to make void,———threw conſcience by;
And, till the deed was done, conſulted not
Its cenſure or applauſe.——You ſhould be more
In heart as well as name;——but you are leſs
Than a weak woman is.———Behold this dagger
———Nay ſtart not at the ſight.

ALBERT.

This dagger?

SEBAS-

SEBASTIAN.

Put
By accident moſt ſtrange, into our hands;
An inſtrument of good.——dare you employ it?

ALBERT.

Employ it?——Upon whom?

SEBASTIAN.

Are you ſo faſt
Lull'd on the bed of ſafety, when the winds
Of danger rock your cradle, as to aſk
On whom it ſhould be us'd?—If I muſt ſpeak;—
Upon Emilia then.

ALBERT.

Periſh this arm,
E'er ſuch another murder as the paſt,
Employ my trembling hand.

SEBASTIAN.

Degen'rate man!
Was it in mock'ry then, that you diſpatch'd
Your warrant with me here?

ALBERT.

I was then ſteel'd
Againſt the nat'ral feelings of a man,
And knew not what I did.——My heart is now,
Subdu'd to pity her, and I repent
Of all that I have done.

SEBASTIAN.

If now you faint,
Irreſolute and weak;——to what intent,
Have you perform'd the paſt?—How did you dare

To take the huſband's life, but that the thought,
Of what you meant to practiſe on the wife,
Forewarn'd you to prevent?

ALBERT.

No more.

SEBASTIAN.

And now,
The danger ſtill as great, you are content
To let diſcov'ry come;——turn not away.——
Loſing the boldneſs that becomes a man
To cry "I do repent."

ALBERT.

Bold fronted wretch!
Rous'd from my lethargy too late,—I bluſh,
That I have link'd my fortunes to a man,
That hath no more about him, than the ſhape
And figure of his kind.——Hence:—take thy gift,
Thy inſtrument of good.——Henceforth I'll hate
Thee and the fiend alike.

SEBASTIAN.

You rant this well,
And now in turn hear me:——Know therefore ſir,
As what's already done, heaps certain danger
On both of us at once;——to ſave myſelf,
I'll poſt me to the duke.

ALBERT.

I am undone!

SEBASTIAN.

SEBASTIAN.

You us'd me, when th' expected pleaſure made
My counſel worth purſuit;—and do you now,
When, at my riſque, you have fulfill'd your wiſhes,
Tell me your conſcience yields to fears and ſcruples?
What's that to me?—But know, ungen'rous Albert,
I will not, the diſcov'ry of your paſſion,
Wait for, before I know, what will become
Of you and of myſelf.——I will be wiſe:——
Prevent it and confeſs:——I muſt.——Farewell.

ALBERT.

Give me a moment's thought,——I've gone too far,
With ſafety to retreat.——What muſt I do?

SEBASTIAN.

Nothing, my lord.——I want but your conſent,
And word ſhe ſhall not live.——Raiſe not a doubt
Upon the conſequence.——I have a way
To make you eaſy there.——Are you agreed?

ALBERT.

Muſt I then murder her?

SEBASTIAN.

Have you gain'd that
Which was to her ſo dear;—and do you now,
Demur to ſeize on what, ev'n ſhe, herſelf,
Muſt as a curſe regard?

ALBERT.

Ha!——let me think.——
Strong argument indeed!——her honeſty,
Like an unworthy trifle, have I ſpoil'd,
And Julio ſent to reſt,—and do I fear—

(Fool like and coward both!) to touch her life,
Which, by the ſtings of guilt and conſcience goaded,
Sits, like the ſhirt of Hercules upon her,——
Tort'ring whilſt worn.———Pardon my haſte
Sebaſtian.——
Till now, I did not ſee our common ſafety,
Connected as it is.——You have convinc'd me;
It is neceſſity and not choice, demands
Her inſtant cutting off.———She's dead.——
I've ſaid it——
This morning is her laſt.——Go to my houſe,
And there digeſt the plot.——Waſte not the time;--
By now I think 'tis one.——I will come to you.

SEBASTIAN.

You muſt, and quickly too.

ALBERT. *Alone.*

A bloody minded
Baſe, and dark dealing ſlave!—a ruffian!—one
That hath a brain to fancy, and a hand
To do the deadlieſt ſin!—who for reward,
Would his own brother ſtab; and, after that,
To take all witneſs off, and ſleep in peace,
His prompter to the act;——when there's no need
Of that he tenders now, could he but gueſs
What kind of love I bear him; he—I'm ſure,—
Would look well to his ſelf.—I muſt do ſomething.

ACT III.

SCENE I. *The houſe of* Albert.

ALBERT. SERVANT.

[*the clock ſtrikes two.*]

ALBERT.

SET down the light.——'Tis well.——Hence
to your chamber.——
When did the clock ſtrike laſt?

SERVANT.

My lord, this moment.

ALBERT.

Leave me.—[*the ſervant retires*] I heard it not.——
My thoughts were turn'd
The way of blood, too much:——ev'ry ſlight noiſe,
Shap'd by the preſent horrors;—to my ear,
Comes as a dying groan;—for murder now,
Cloath'd like a human form, beſmears the floor
With unoffending blood.——When it is done,
He tells me we are ſafe.——'Tis falſe!——
for ne'er
The murd'rer can be ſafe, unleſs he could
Stifle the voice of blood, which,—from the times
Of the firſt Cain, till yeſterday,—hath cried
Moſt audibly to heav'n.———What if I ſend,
And ſtop the cruel deed?——but Julio,—him,

Alas I have diſpatch'd!—there ground my hopes.--
Can I the dead awake, or to the grave,
Bid the life breath come back?——Hark;——
how replies
The tempter to that queſtion!——never Albert,—
Let her then die.——She muſt.——I am reſolv'd.—
Her murder, is the conſequence of that,
Which is already done.——No more of thought:—
To drown thee I'll abroad,—for yet 'tis night;—
And, with the ſpirits of the dark, repair
Near the ſad ſpot, where murder muſt diſpatch
Emilia's ſoul to heav'n:—there ſhall I gain
Quick notice of the deed; till when, I lie
Bound upon thorns.——Come now the raven's ſong,
Making ſweet muſic as I paſs along.

SCENE II. The *priſon*.

[*long and loud knocking*]

PROVOST.

What knocking's that?——Hark—-was't not at
the draw-bridge?——
I've ſent to let him in:——ſome thing of moment:
From the commandant ſure.—-But then ſo early!—
What can it mean?—the noiſe they made, awoke me
Out of a dream, wherein I thought of axes,
Halters and knives, and heard the ſhrieks of women:
Pray heav'n it prove not,—as, I fear, it may be,—
Forerunner of ſome ill.

PROVOST.

PROVOST. SEBASTIAN. REGINALD. SERVANT.

SERVANT.

Sir, there's the provoſt.

PROVOST. *Aſide.*

What men are theſe? [*receiving a letter from* Sebaſtian]—this letter comes from Albert.
I do not like their looks.——Let's ſee.——What ſays it?

REGINALD. *Apart to* Sebaſtian.

I hope ſir, you do nothing, but by order?

SEBASTIAN.

Go to;—ne'er fear me man.——Have you but courage
And your reward's to come.

PROVOST. *Aſide.*

"Surrender!"——humph!——

REGINALD. *Apart.*

What's that he mutters there?

SEBASTIAN.

He's pond'ring only
On what the letter ſays.

REGINALD.

I thought he ſpoke.

PROVOST.

Your name ſir, as I take it, is Sebaſtian.——
This letter bids me then ſurrender to you
The office I have here; [*to the ſervant who withdraws*]——Go you away.——
Sir, I obey the order;—'tis my duty;

Yet muſt you hear me in a ſlight petition,
Though of ſome moment too.

SEBASTIAN.

How may I ſerve you?

PROVOST.

My promiſe is engag'd to poor Emilia;
For her kind treatment here.——She is a creature,
Whoſe ſorrows might make bankrupt of compaſſion,
And not be wept enough——

SEBASTIAN.

Sir, I have learn'd
Her melancholy ſtory, and if tears
Sprung from diſtreſs in female boſoms only,
I ſhould diſtruſt my ſex; ſo much theſe eyes
Have been at flow, to hear of her misfortunes:
Sincerely do I ſpeak; for, tho' I ſay it,
Who ſhould not praiſe myſelf;——yet does my heart
E'en now bleed for her; and I ſhould——believe me——
Though I were not form'd liable to pity
My fellow creatures' pains,————feel heartily
For her partic'lar caſe:——be certain of it.

PROVOST.

You make me happy.——I will on the inſtant,
Go to my lord; whom, willingly I have not
In any thing, offended.——As I gueſs,
Some ſland'rous underminer hath induc'd him,
Thus to proceed with me.——I will go ſeek him.

SEBASTIAN. REGINALD.

SEBASTIAN.

Your labour will be loſt; and now, good fellow,
With that, of which, already I have told you,
Take this along with you;——ſhe ſtands accus'd
Of ploting Albert's death; and, though by law,—
I mean the forms and ceremonies of it,—
She is no convict; yet, in her own boſom,
Being guilty, ſhe's condemn'd:——and this, I tell you,
Out of the way, to move all little ſtops,
When you are at the deed.

REGINALD

Conduct me to her,
And better do I know the trade I live by,
Than ſtand to aſk, what reaſons make you wiſh her
Out of the way.

SEBASTIAN.

Thou'rt right lad; and I ſee,
There's metal in thy heart;——I hate a fellow
Who cannot, with an eye compos'd and ſettled
As that, which he would look with, on the moon,
Do, what weak ſouls call murder; but it merits
Another kind of name.——Are you determin'd?

REGINALD.

To murder her I am; yet, if more's needful,
Name but the ſum, with which you'll pay my ſervice,
And I'll perform that too.

SEBAS-

SEBASTIAN.

Then,—to our buſineſs.——
Sir—'tis no common murder, you are paid for;
It will require ſome art;—and, to inform you,
How much the worthy governor deſires
You ſhould be ſafe, he 'as hit upon a plot,
Which, you muſt own, well laid.—Here, is a dagger,
It was her huſband's once; but how we got it,
I ſhall not now relate.——This dagger therefore,
When you have done the thing; which—as you prize
Our ſafety and your own—take heed you leave not
Half unperform'd;—for ſir, if ſhe expire not
Under your ſurgery;—the miſchief, meant
Upon her head, will, at our door ſit down
And all of us undo.

REGINALD.

You mock me ſurely.

SEBASTIAN.

This dagger then,——when you have done your errand,
Muſt be behind you left; and, in ſuch manner,
That thoſe, whom we may ſummon to obſerve her,
May deem it her own guilt;—and, to confirm
The ſuicide ſtill more, ſee, here's a letter,
As written by herſelf, at large containing
The motive, that has urg'd her to commit
So deſperate a deed.——Look that you leave it,
(For 'twill befriend us much,)——upon her pillow,
Bed, table, or where not.

REGI-

REGINALD.

Enough.—I'll do it.

SEBASTIAN.

That gall'ry is the entrance to her chamber;—
Go in and falter not;—be bold but ſilent;
For better will it ſerve our preſent purpoſe,
To kill her as ſhe ſleeps.——I could beſt teach you
What I'd have done, and, with it too, the manner,
By doing all myſelf;——but weightieſt reaſons
Deter me from the attempt.——Away.—About it.

SEBASTIAN. *Alone.*

Let daſtard ſouls fear conſcience;—I have learn'd
To ſtifle its upbraidings, and the heel
That hath long kick'd againſt the pricks is now,
Grown ſenſeleſs of their points.——Thoughts, dark as night,
Habitual to my boſom, have ſhut out
All fears that mate with guilt.——

SEBASTIAN. REGINALD.

SEBASTIAN.

Have you diſpatch'd it?

REGINALD.

Emilia's fled.

SEBASTIAN.

Fled!——how?——eſcap'd?——
What mean you?

REGINALD.

I found the caſement open, and a ladder
Fix'd to the ſtaple bar.

SEBAS-

SEBASTIAN.

Wait here awhile :——
I'll come to you again.——eſcap'd !——impoſſible.
[*runs out*]

REGINALD.

Then I have loſt my fee.——In all my life
I never was ſo foil'd.——

SEBASTIAN. *Returning.*

Fly to the turret
Ring the alarum bell.——Wake the whole city.—
That ſhe is fled, tis true; and at the window;
But far, ſhe cannot be.——Thence to the caſtle.——
Call up the governor.——Yet ſtay,——the letter,
Where is it?——let me ſee 't.——the dagger like-wiſe:
They are both uſeleſs now :——

SEBASTIAN. *Alone.*

My life upon it,
The provoſt is concern'd.———'Tis more than likely;——
He ſhall be firſt ſecur'd, for after thinking
Tells me th' eſcape was his; in proof of which,
[*the alarm is rung*]
No circumſtance, like that of his entreating
She might be kindly us'd,—intended doubtleſs—
As the beſt means to hide his knowledge of it,
Speaks half ſo much.——Mean while, for our own ſafety,
Her flight we'll turn to uſe.——It ſpeaks her guilty,
No evidence more ſtrong.——The ſleepy citizens
Buſtle and flock together in the ſtreet

As

As if the town were fired.——How's this——lord
Albert?

SEBASTIAN. ALBERT. REGINALD.

SEBASTIAN.

So quickly up and here?

ALBERT.

Of that in future;——
What ſhall we do Sebaſtian?

SEBASTIAN.

Where's the provoſt?
Meet were it to attach him, for abetting
Emilia in her flight.——Our firſt proceedings
Muſt be with him; and, for the woman, Albert,
Never regard her once.——Conceal'd, ſhe cannot
Remain within the town; but where's the provoſt?

ALBERT.

In the way here, I met him, by the ruins
Of the old abbey wall.

SEBASTIAN.

I'll ſend and take him.
[*to* Reginald] Go ſeek the villain out, and bring
him hither

SEBASTIAN. ALBERT.

SEBASTIAN.

Say he is guiltleſs of it,——which he may be,——
Yet is that juſtice cunning, that on him
Fixes her eye; as 'twill a proper face,
Upon your conduct put, and foul ſuſpicion,

Rob

Rob of her pow'r to prompt in comments on you,
Ev'ry man's tongue.——The ſtrumpet that hath
fled us
Still is but one; yet being that;——when taken,
Let her be damn'd at once.——You ſeem not well?

ALBERT.

We are undone!——I would have ſpar'd the man
But was compell'd to yield.——Now, ſhe is fled,
What will become of us?

SEBASTIAN.

Unſettled lord!
Does her eſcape poſſeſs you with theſe fears,
When you might ſee, it will revert to good
And prove more witneſs than a thouſand tongues
Of her ſuppos'd offence?——call up your courage,
And ſhew yourſelf a man.——Proclaim reward
To him that brings her in.

ALBERT.

It is too late
To look back and retreat.

SEBASTIAN. ALBERT. REGINALD.

ALBERT.

Now where's the provoſt?

REGINALD.

Safe in the room within:——th' alarm had brought him
On the way back.

ALBERT.

Myſelf will go and charge him.

SEBASTIAN.

Do, and perform it home.

ALBERT

ALBERT.

I am advis'd;——
Doubt nothing of my care.

SEBASTIAN. REGINALD.

REGINALD.

Further Sebaſtian—
In my way hence, to apprehend the provoſt,
Did I o'er hear a man (who's now in waiting)
Say to the thronging townſmen, that this morning
Nearly at one; weſt of the tow'r a furlong;
Muffled and maſqu'd, a youth ran ſwiftly by him,
Making towards the wood.

SEBASTIAN.

I will purſue her.——
Follow me Reginald;——but firſt, more fully
Find out the way ſhe took, and leave behind you
Word of our journey, that my lord may know it.
Loſe not a moment: at the Grange, I'll wait you.

SCENE III. *Another part of the priſon.*

ALBERT. PROVOST. OFFICER.

ALBERT.

We were inform'd ſo provoſt, when we ſent
Sebaſtian, with our warrant, for your office:——
If in her flight you have aſſiſted,——ſpeak
And nothing ſhall enſue,

PROVOST.

PROVOST.

I've ſpoke already.
On her entreaty, at the hour of midnight,
Did I diſpatch a letter to the ſiſter;
Anſw'ring to which, a ſervant waited on her
Cloſe at the back, of him that bore the meſſuage:—
If you demur to this, I will ſubmit
My conduct to ſtrict teſt;——therefore appoint,
The time I may be heard.

ALBERT.

[*Aſide.*] His confidence
Shews he knows all and warns me to diſſemble.——
I'm glad of this; and, 'twas to prove you honeſt,
That I proceeded thus.—Yet, ſtill there's ſomething
Due to the world, that always fond of ſlander,——
On you will charge her flight;——and therefore,
Provoſt,
You muſt contentedly endure confinement,
Till, by the rev'rend judges of the city,
Your innocence is prov'd:——and think of this,
But as a ſtep of form,——a ceremony,
Made ſacred by long uſe; and be of heart;
In me you have a friend.

PROVOST.

I will endure
With patience, the ſuſpicion I am under,
Till I can clear myſelf.

ALBERT. *Alone.*

That ſhall be never;——
Elſe will in him, this murder and ſeduction

Lay

Lay ſiege to my own life.——I have begun;
And trav'ller like, whom falling ſnows ſurpriſe
On the deſerted heath, muſt now go on,
Since equally, the path already trod,
With danger threats my foot.——The fever thus,
Cries out for "more", and every ſecond draught's
More welcome, as more needful than the firſt.——
So do I likewiſe, burn with a diſeaſe,
A fever of the ſoul; that with parch'd throat,
Tho' with large ſwills of blood already gorg'd,
"More, give me more" cries ſtill: and therefore now
Subſervient to my pleaſure,—ſhall the law
Wreck its ſeverity upon the provoſt:——
So of his murder, do I waſh my hands,
Yet bid the knife perform.——I will about it.

SCENE IV. *The foreſt.*

EMILIA *in man's apparel.*

Alas—I've travell'd hard through paths perplex'd
That human feet ſcarce tread!----where will it end?
I'm chang'd but in the habit of my ſex.
My nature's ſtill the ſame.——That alters not
As faſhions do in dreſs.——Oh!—would it did,
That heav'n might ſtill be mine!---and ſee, the ſun,
Forth to the world, exhibiting my ſhame,
Peeps o'er yon diſtant hills.—Why ſhould it ſhine?
Why ſhould the day come back, when on my cheek
The never-fading bluſh of guilt muſt live,

And, on the ſwarthy countenance of night,
Reflect a ſickly beam;—enough to note
Man's wickedneſs and mine.———There's no one honeſt;——
Guilt is hereditary;——every parent
Gives it with life, to thoſe he *calls* his children;
And, by the ſtream of time, 'tis handed down
To ſon from father,—like a ball of ſnow,
Increaſing as it rolls.——I've heard, theſe woods
Are tenanted by thieves;——alas! I'm poor
And have not to beſtow, what rapine ſeeks:——
Th' ineſtimable jewel of my ſoul,——
Ev'n that is gone.——Oh ſiſter! thou was't kind;
To pity a poor wretch by all abandon'd:
And, not alone this habit, but the ground
I tread upon,—with guilt would tax my ſoul,
Should I, in death, forget my pray'rs to heav'n
For bleſſings on thy head.——If I was free'd
By thy good hand,——thou freed'ſt me not to die
(As I muſt)—here; my ev'ry hope of veng'ance,
Gone like a dream.——[*ſhe ſhrieks and falls.*]

EMILIA. ROLANDO. LUCIUS. VALENTINE. LEOLINE, *and* OTHERS.

ROLANDO.

Lay hands upon him there,
But offer him no harm.——A goodly ſtripling!
Well favour'd and young too!——but that his dreſs
Gives my conceit the lie, I ſhould pronounce him
A girl

A girl upon my life.——Let him alone;
He's coming to his ſelf.

VALENTINE.

I think 'twere meet
To ſearch the place about—he muſt have friends;
For no one in his wits, would run the hazard
Of trav'lling here alone——I'll ſcour the foreſt.

ROLANDO.

Go with him, one or two;—but, ſhould you meet
With thoſe of the duke's train; whom, late laſt night
We reconnoitred here,—avoid their ſight:
There may be danger in't:——beſides, ſome means
Will we in future find, whereby his grace
May learn he ſtands oblig'd, perhaps for life,
To baniſh'd men, by law made deſperate.

VALENTINE.

That caution was in vain. [*Valentine and Leoline depart.*]

ROLANDO.

How is it with you?——
Look:—he revives.——Be comforted good youth.
There's not a hair upon your head, ſhall find
Diſparagement from us;—nor have you loſt
What your good fortune, elſe, might have held forth;
Unleſs, it be a miſery, for one
Bewilder'd in a wood, to have the hand

Of hoſpitality and friends ſtretch'd out,
By heav'n,—for his relief.

LUCIUS.

He hears you not;
Our numbers do but keep his fears awake:——
Good gentlemen, withdraw yourſelves awhile,
And meet us at the cave; where, by and by,
We'll bring him for refreſhment.

EMILIA. ROLANDO. LUCIUS.

EMILIA.

If you'll kill me;—
(And I am old enough to know, you never
Spare any, whom ill fortune throws among you;)—
I muſt ſubmit.

ROLANDO.

How ſtrong his fears work in him!——
Talk not of killing.——True it is, we live
At enmity with man, but this inſtructs us
No farther than to rob him of the traſh
With which he fills his purſe.——The life we never
(When unprovok'd to't,)—touch.

EMILIA.

Is't poſſible!

LUCIUS.

If it were not,—why are you ſtill alive,
To tax us with ſuch guilt?——you, we had kill'd,
As we have others done; but take due note
We ſuffer our revenge,—that Nemean beaſt—

Which

Which ſeldom can be tam'd, to couch in covert
As if we heard you not.

ROLANDO.

There's in your face,
Something that claims our love.——then challenge freely
The ſervices you need.——We're not the men,
That the world quotes us for; but of a temper,—
I might perhaps ſay better,—yet as good
As they that cenſure us.

EMILIA.

I'm wrapt in wonder,
And know not what to ſay, but, that I thank you.

ROLANDO.

We gueſs you have your cares.——Perhaps you've loſt
A friend or father; mother or a wife:—
Theſe are great loſſes all, and the vaſt world
No anodyne approv'd of, can hold out
To ſoothe the tortur'd mind, when ills ſo great
Delve at the root of life;—and only time,
Can, with oblivious hand, the life blood ſtaunch
That iſſues at ſuch wounds:——but, if hard preſs'd
By the relentleſs hand of pow'r, you came
Here for relief; or ſhould th' unpitying arm
Of ſome hard creditor, be ſtretch'd forth againſt you;
Our foreſt cavern ſhall it's gates, fling back,
And ſcreen you from purſuit.

EMILIA.

Oh heav'n!—my heart!

ROLANDO.

Give me your hand.——The ſky ſeems overcaſt,
And threats us with a ſtorm.—Aſſiſt me Lucius.—
Truſt on our care; and, to deſerve it better,
Say who you are.

[*they raiſe her.*]

EMILIA.

A poor unfort'nate youth
Trav'lling to Venice.

ROLANDO.

Good;—and wherefore thither?

EMILIA.

I have no friend,——(one whom I had, b'ing dead:)
To miniſter to my wants; by which, ſore preſs'd,
I meant to ſeek the court; and, that I might not
Live on the bread of ſloth, offer myſelf
To the great duke.

ROLANDO.

Go on.

EMILIA.

Now, comes the worſt.——
I had a maſter,—one, whoſe paſſing goodneſs,
Words are too poor to paint;—we liv'd in Padua,
Happy indeed!——till the croſs clouds of fortune
Frown'd on our ſpring.——Poor Julio,—my lord's name,—
Was by the law, for ends moſt damnable,
Doom'd to a cruel death.

ROLANDO.

Break off your tale:——

The

The tempeſt grows apace.——Lead to the cave;—
There you ſhall tell the reſt.——But what's your
name?

EMILIA.

They call me Polydore.

ROLANDO.

Your hand good Lucius.—
Be comforted;—I have a mind, perſuades me
Your griefs are not paſt cure:——lean on my arm.

SCENE V. *Another part of the foreſt.*

LEOLINE.

Here is the copſe, where Valentine agreed
We both of us, ſhould meet.——I ſee him com-
ing.——
Hollo!——what ſpeed?

LEOLINE. VALENTINE.

VALENTINE.

Stand Leoline apart;
For near yon range of citrons, I've diſcover'd
Two men, who from the very ſpot, muſt be
The objects of our ſearch.—I've dogg'd 'em hither,
Where, as I think, they mean to come for ſhelter.
——Let us retire to mark them.——We may gather
Something from their own mouths, well worth our
knowledge.——
Go in before.——Do you not hear them coming?

SEBASTIAN. REGINALD; *and retired in a gap on one ſide,* VALENTINE *and* LEOLINE.

SEBASTIAN.

This is a ſtorm indeed!

REGINALD.

'Twill ſoon be ſpent;
Beſides, we're now, well cover'd from its fury.——
Did you not hear a noiſe?

SEBASTIAN.

A noiſe?——what noiſe?

REGINALD.

Methought one cried "hollo."

SEBASTIAN.

That cannot be:—
This foreſt has no tenants, but a knot
Of robbers, that conceal theirſelves within it:——
'Twas nothing but the wind.

REGINALD.

Well—tell me now,
To paſs our time away, whilſt here we ſhelter:
What is this thing, you promis'd I ſhould know of?

SEBASTIAN.

I have,—nor think I flatter thee, good Reginald,—
With an attentive eye, remark'd thy carriage,
Which is diſcreet; and therefore will I truſt thee.

VALENTINE. *Aſide.*

What may this mean!——obſerve him, but ſpeak nothing.

SEBAS-

SEBASTIAN.

Learn then that this Emilia, whom we're ſearching,
No more deſerv'd, the deſp'rate end we meant her,
Than the babe now unborn.

VALENTINE. *Aſide.*

Do you mark that?

REGINALD.

This is a riddle ſir:——explain the meaning.

SEBASTIAN.

Firſt let me tell you then,—this pious Albert,—
The governor I mean,——is what the world,——
Knew they his life,—would ſtile a villain.

VALENTINE. *Aſide.*

Albert?——
A deputy of the duke.——Pray mark him cloſely;
This may be worth our pains.

SEBASTIAN.

I ſay,—a villain——
If firſt,—for ſo he did——apart to tamper
Upon forbidden ſubjects with the wife,
Whilſt Julio lay in hold; and to poſſeſs
Her beauty upon promiſe of his pardon;
Next, whilſt he did it;—to diſpatch myſelf,
With orders to ſtrike off her huſband's head;
Then, to convey it to the public ear,
That ſhe had ſchem'd his death; and, this perform'd,
On my ſuggeſtion to attempt her life,
Though, in it, we have fail'd:——if theſe be deeds
That conſtitute a villain;—then, I ſay,
The governor is one.

VALEN-

VALENTINE. *Aſide.*

Go to;—go to;——

The raven chides the crow.

SEBASTIAN.

I'm wet already.——

We muſt ſeek out ſome place, that's better ſhelter'd
Or face it in the field.——Come let's remove.

VALENTINE. *Aſide.*

We'll take 'em unawares.——Leave me to deal
With him, that ſpoke juſt now.——They muſt not 'ſcape us.——
You ſee, they're pointing here.

REGINALD.

Yonder's a gap,
Well cover'd from the ſtorm.

SEBASTIAN.

Come on then.

VALENTINE. *Aſide.*

Now.

[*As they advance to the gap,* Valentine *and* Leoline *ruſh out upon them.*]

VALENTINE *and* LEOLINE.

Yield villains, or ye die.

[Sebaſtian *retiring, preſſes upon* Reginald *and falls:* Reginald *runs off, purſued by* Leoline.]

VALENTINE.

After him, Leoline.

[*before* Valentine *can diſarm* Sebaſtian, *he extricates his ſelf, riſes and draws.*]

SEBAS-

SEBASTIAN.

Thieves!—murder!—help!—Oh lord have mercy on me.

[*he falls down wounded*]

VALENTINE.

Come ſir;—your caſh; [*rifling him*] let's ſee;—let's ſee;—let's ſee;—
What have we here?—a dagger!—how now villain!
Secretly arm'd!——ſir by *your* leave lie there,——
And *you* along with him * ——your journey's ſpoil'd
And you may now e'en ſleep,——for ſtir, you cannot.——
Give me your hand.——I'm your apothecary:
Here, in the wet, you may perhaps catch cold;
Therefore along with me.—There's ſhelter for you.

[*drags him into the gap.*]

Anon, I'll bring you friends;——by th' laws of war,
This ſword is mine:——your cloak, I'll borrow of you:——
I will make bold too, with this handkerchief,
And ſo, I leave you to your meditation.

ACT

* Alluding to his dagger, papers, and money.

ACT IV.

SCENE I. A *dark cave in the foreſt.*

SEBASTIAN *faſten'd to the ground.*

WHAT place is this?——where am I?——
and what fate
Is for my crimes reſerv'd?——death is the laſt,
Great priviledge, which every wretch may claim
When life, by conſcience mortified, grows painful;
But, 'tis from me, ſhut out; and the ſword's point,
The ſtrangling cord, and the convulſive cup
Their friendly aid, deny;——yet nails, may do
The office of the knife.——If it be ſo,
Why, do I heſitate upon the means?
But that I fear to die!——had I a heart,
With wrong on wrong, the gentleſt of her ſex,
Moſt fiend like, to purſue, and do I now
That paltry courage lack, which would direct
My fingers to my throat?——'twere but to beat
This head againſt the pavement which I preſs,
And life were at an end;——but oh! I dread
This being to put off, having done that,
Which,——(heaven's preventing hand unſtretch'd
forth)—muſt
Embitter the long next!——I hear 'em coming:—
Doubtleſs

Doubtleſs, to murder me!——oh that the earth,—
Wide op'ning,——would receive me in her womb,
And bury me at once.

SEBASTIAN. EMILIA.

EMILIA.

Sure this dark cave
In all, reſembles hell;——and I, a fiend
Wander through ev'ry part of it, like one
Familiar to the place.——What ſhall I do?
Theſe men have been my friends;——they've entertain'd me,
Sooth'd me in ſorrow, and their captain ſeems
Of a frank heart,——diſpos'd to do me ſervice;—
And, as I truſt, would ſtartle at the crimes
Which other men, call'd better than his ſelf,
Ev'ry day practiſe.——Witchcraft is a ſin
Leſs than ingratitude.——The ground is bloody!
Horror!——a groan!——help! murder, murder murder!——

SEBASTIAN. EMILIA. ROLANDO. LUCIUS. VALENTINE. *and* OTHERS.

ROLANDO.

Where is this villain now?—[*ſeeing* Emilia *ready to faint*]——ſupport him Lucius.

EMILIA.

Mercy!——oh mercy all!——I kill'd him not.

ROLAN-

ROLANDO.

Nor did we mean good Polydore, you did.
Theſe are his papers here.——Look up and anſwer:
Know you this gentleman?——look up and ſpeak

SEBASTIAN.

I'll not.

ROLANDO.

What's that he ſays?

VALENTINE.

He ſays, he will not.

ROLANDO.

Thou 'adſt better tho';—or, look well to the iſſue.
We'll force thee to obey.——know you this youth?

SEBASTIAN. *Aſide.*

My guilt unmans me,—for I fear his threats.——
I know him not.

ROLANDO.

That's ſtrange!——know *you* this villain?

EMILIA.

I recollect him now;——but ſure, that title
Never belong'd to him:——he was a friend
To my poor miſtreſs, and once went between her
And the vile governor.

ROLANDO.

You miſconceive him.——
This is the miſcr'ant, by whoſe helliſh counſel,
That Albert, you have told us of,—(a villain
Leſs than his ſelf, becauſe he lack'd his cunning)—
Hath been impell'd to all thoſe horrid wrongs
Of Julio and his wife; and Albert had

Deſiſted

Deſiſted from the attempt, but that this ruffian,
Whoſe temples are grown white, i' th' trade of ſin,
Like Satan at Eve's ear, ſtood by and ſaid
" Do thus and thus."

EMILIA.

Why ſpeak not *you* Sebaſtian?——
He's ſilent and 'tis true!——horrible villain!

ROLANDO.

Now, in his papers, did we find this letter,
Which he, or his aſſociate, counterfeited.——
And, to increaſe the wonder, I muſt tell you,
From his own mouth we've learn'd, that as he counſel'd,
Emilia's death was plan'd, but that her flight
Stepp'd in to foil the deed; which, had it proſper'd,
The letter, as we gueſs, was meant to point
The murder on herſelf.

EMILIA.

Deep plotting villains!

LUCIUS. *Aſide.*

Captain, a word with you. [*they all confer apart*]

EMILIA

[*reads*] " Stung with remorſe
" That the good Albert, was by me accus'd,
" I have done this.—You that wipe off the blood
" Which to my dagger cleaves, intreat that heav'n
" May, in like manner, from my ſpotted ſoul,
" Waſh ev'ry ſtain away." [*ſpeaks*]——and here's the dagger.——

Spotted!

Spotted!——that's hard!——oh Albert!—villain,
villain!——
Thy triumph laſts too long.——I'd give the world
To be that devil, which thou long, haſt ſerv'd;
So at thy ſide, this inſtant would I ſtand,
And, with a voice loud as the cannon's roar,
Tell thee, how near above thy perjur'd head
Veng'ance is hung.——Yet ſoft with this, my ſoul.
Thy paſſion may prove fatal; and diſcloſe
The thing thou ſhouldſt conceal.——Alas! I fear
It is already done.——Why do they whiſper?——
Their eyes were fix'd upon me whilſt I ſpoke,
Peruſing ev'ry limb:——if it be ſo,
I am indeed a wretch, and of revenge
Muſt forfeit all my hopes.

ROLANDO *apart to the reſt.*

Stand you aſide,
And on that ſign depart.——The reſt I'll manage.

EMILIA.

I pray you, aſk him ſir, why Albert put
Emilia into hold.

ROLANDO.

You hear the queſtion.

SEBASTIAN.

She did conſpire his death.

EMILIA.

Sure you belye her.——
She was too good,——ſupport me heav'n!——to
take
The breath ſhe could not give.—Alas! ſhe deem'd it
Sinful and cruel both, to lay her hand

On

On the offending fly.—Inform me then,
How ſhould ſhe murder Albert?

SEBASTIAN.

Wherefore urge you
Such ſhallow proofs as theſe?—ſhe did attempt it.

EMILIA.

Wert thou great Hercules or Jove his ſelf,
I would, with this weak arm, attempt to tear
Thy falſe tongue from thy throat, were no one by
To ſtay me from the deed.—Fie on thee, wretch!
Guilty of force, ſhe might be; but, with choice
No babe ſinn'd ever leſs;---and woe to Albert,
That by falſe promiſes,---the tricks of Satan,—
Won her to infamy and proſtitution,
For her poor huſband's life.—I'th' day of veng'ance
Let him look to it well.

ROLANDO.

Some where about
This ſolitary quarter of the heath,
Emilia muſt be hid.—Could we meet with her,
We would afford her help;—ſhe ſhould find friends
Who, to the preſſing wants of her weak ſex,
Food and repoſe, would tenderly hold out,
And, to the wrongs which have been heap'd upon her,
Veng'ance perhaps.

EMILIA.

For her ſake, let me thank you:—
This generous compaſſion to a woman

Hated by all, brings tears into my eyes
Of unaffected joy.——What mean you, ſir?
[*obſerving the* banditti *retire, upon a ſignal from* Rolando.]
Pity!—oh pity!—on my knees I beg you
Call 'em again.—I will confeſs, hide nothing;
Hear me.—Oh! hear me, ſir.

ROLANDO.

Be not alarm'd,
Emilia, if you are;—as, on my honour,
I do conceive no leſs;——that thing, made up
Of complicated wrong;——whom I lament,
And whom I would redreſs:—if you are ſhe,
Say it at once.

SEBASTIAN.

Emilia—ah!—that name
Sinks me a ſecond time—where now is deafneſs!

ROLANDO.

And yet, I will not preſs you to impeach
The honour of your ſex:—reſerve your bluſhes:
I will believe you that, which my late friendſhip,
Refining now to love,—(a guiltleſs paſſion)—
Tells me you are;—and think not, thou wrong'd fair one,
By naming of that word, I meant to meet
With inſult, your diſtreſs:——what I will do,
In favour of the veng'ance you may wiſh for,
Shall be the dictates of ſuch ſacred love,
As cloiſter'd virgins might inſpire in hermits.

EMILIA.

What ſhall I ſay?

ROLANDO.

Riſe, madam, and command
The ſervice of a friend.—That villain, Albert
Will we—heav'n's aid upon our juſt endeavours,
Drag forth to public anſwer.——For this ſlave,
Upon whoſe crimes, no rigour can inflict
A counterpoiſe of pains; he ſhall be us'd
To make your vengeance ſure: and lo! as if
Heav'n ſided on your part, the duke of Venice,
From whoſe high hand alone muſt iſſue juſtice,
Lies now encamp'd, upon the river's borders,
Eaſt of this place a mile.—I ſee your wonder.—
What he does here, we know not.—Hence, to find
him
Shall you be ſafely guided, and Mecenas
Hear your ſad tale.—The tempeſt of the morning
Now is diſperſt:——look not upon the villain.
Inſtant ſhall you ſet out.——Come in, nor think
But all things will go well.

EMILIA.

I'm ſick at heart.

SEBASTIAN. *Alone.*

What now becomes of me!——there is no hope,
Except as I repent.——The good Emilia
I have much injur'd;—but, b'ing good,—ſhe muſt
Both pity and forgive, as ſhe, her ſelf,
Repenting, would find grace;—yet what avails
This goodneſs in an other, to blot out

One ſin from my long 'count?—When we ſhall meet
At the great day of doom, will human pardon
Block up the gates of hell, by juſtice bid
To take the murd'rer in?—prepoſt'rous queſtion!
Why then, ſhould this ſlight ſcratch extort one groan,
Which but my body pains, and that muſt die,
When in the ſoul there is a gangrene fix'd,
In whoſe wide womb a thouſand daggers ruſt,
That cannot be pluck'd out.—Oh! when will come,
Madneſs indeed, to baniſh painful thought!

SCENE II. *The duke's Tent.*

The duke's ATTENDANTS.

ATTENDANT.

Now my good brother lords;—this tempeſt paſt,
Shall we go forth; but where retires his grace?—
Soft! as I think, he comes.—[*the* duke, *with* Cornelio, *comes in*.]

DUKE.

Good morrow, ſirs;
I will not hunt to-day.——Cornelio here
Tells me ſtrange things of Padua, that call out
For our quick preſence there.—But ſay, Cornelio,
How did you gain this news?

COR-

CORNELIO.

Laſt night, my lord,
By the moon's beams—your grace retir'd to ſlumber :——
Reading a-while, I heard th' alarum ſounded
Faint tho' it was! and curious grown, to gather
What might have paſs'd; this morning with the earlieſt,
Sent I my ſervant thither, who returning,
Brought this account; which, as my duty bade me,
Have I reveal'd.

DUKE.

But ſhe it ſeems hath fled us:
Yet, if this land contains her, long ſhe ſhall not
Reſt in concealment, ſince, to apprehend her,
No ſum ſhall be too great.——I lov'd her once;
But theſe, ſo broad offences, have wip'd out
Her mem'ry from my heart:—beſides I love
The truſty Albert too, and juſtice ſhall
Give him revenge.

ATTENDANT.

Will not your grace then hunt?

DUKE.

No,—my good lord.---My ſpirits are depreſs'd;
And I will hence for Padua;—the intent
Of the once good Emilia, may have rais'd
Foes to our deputy there, that we, perhaps,
May by our preſence quell.----Prepare poſt horſes
For our departure hence.-----When we return,

Will we to mirth; and if lord Albert's ſafe,
Short ſhall our tarrying be.—[*a gentleman comes in.*]

GENTLEMAN.

There is a youth
Standing without; who, in the name of heav'n,
Begs to behold your grace:—in vain, we've aſk'd him
How, and of whom, he'as gain'd intelligence
Of your retreat; nor, when to his intreaties
Anſwering, we ſaid you were not to be ſpoke with
On a requeſt like his, would he accept it.

DUKE.

Go then, Cornelio, you; and with our anſwer
Send him away:—we have no time to laviſh
Upon a trifler now.—Much grief hath made me
Not maſter of myſelf.—I muſt forget it.

SCENE III. *Another part of the Tent.*

CORNELIO. EMILIA. LUCIUS.

CORNELIO.

Speak with the duke?

EMILIA.

And if, as I conceive,
You wait upon him here, do me the grace,
Which, were this Venice, I might freely claim,
Of ſpeaking with my lord.

COR-

CORNELIO.

My lord's commands
Were poſitively urged:——you may depart;
Your audience unobtain'd:—he's now employ'd
In preparation for a journey hence,
To Padua, and this moment he ſets out.

EMILIA.

To Padua ſaid you, ſir?——now, let me beg;
The rather, ſince the duke is ſo intent,—
That you deny me not.——I have a ſuit
Which muſt not be delay'd:——th' importance of it
Calls for the preſent time, elſe had I not
Thus preſs'd on his repoſe.

CORNELIO.

Why,---What's the matter?
Pray you be gone—to tarry here were fruitleſs;
I dare not introduce you.

EMILIA.

Then, at leaſt,
If it be ſo,—let me conjure you, ſir,
To carry him this ring:——it is a token
Known to his grace, no leſs than his own hand,
For once the gem was his:---if you are queſtion'd
Touching the owner—I intreat you'd tell him,
That, by the ſtrangeſt chance, I light upon it,
Which is a ſecret—in his private hearing
Well worthy to be learn'd,—as it concerns
And, nearly too, his ſelf.

CORNELIO.

Give me your ring;
I'll bear it to his grace;——anon, expect
Some anſwer to your meſſage.—Wait here for it,

EMILIA. LUCIUS.

EMILIA.

I thank you for your pains, and now muſt beg
That you withdraw awhile.——I would not have
The duke obſerve you here.——Retire without,
I'll ſpeak to you again; 'till when, in patience,
Wait till I ſend you word, which ſhall be ſhortly.

EMILIA. *Alone.*

'Tis not his death that I ſo much lament;——
For many a woman hath her huſband loſt,
Or ſoon or late muſt loſe;—it is not that,
Which makes life ſo uneas'ly ſit upon me;
But, that my ſoul, I have ſteep'd low in guilt
To ſave him—and in vain.—Oh fool! fool! fool!
What ordinance enjoins us to lay down
The life, we could not on ourſelves beſtow,
Though for the deareſt friend?—There is no law
To countenance ſuch love.—What ſcorpions then
Does heav'n not keep in ſtore to puniſh her,
Who,—to redeem a huſband from that grave
Which ſhall not hold him long,—conſents to die
For a long---long eternity!——The duke
Muſt grant me juſtice, where my full blown wrongs

Have

Have mark'd the name of villain;——that, once gain'd,—
A long farewell to life.——I ſee him coming.

EMILIA. DUKE.

DUKE.

What myſtery is this?---a boy!---who are you?

EMILIA.

One to affliction wedded,—yet not that
Which outwardly I ſeem.

DUKE.

Where did you get
The ring you ſent me here?

EMILIA.

If I ſhould ſay
A woman gave it me——your royal ear,
Would greatly be abus'd.

DUKE.

This ring I gave,
In token of my love, to one Emilia,
Then to my heart moſt dear.—Know you that woman?
You had the ring of her!

EMILIA.

Oh my ſad heart!---
See you this face, my lord?——obſerve it well;
And let the wrongs engrav'd ſo deeply there,
Aſſert that juſtice, which my tongue demands.

DUKE.

DUKE.

Why how is this?-----Juſtice!-----on what?-----on whom?

EMILIA.

Upon a villain, whom the world calls Albert.

DUKE.

Villain thyſelf.

EMILIA.

If you deny my pray'r,
You are no lawful ſov'reign, but a tyrant.
Calamity is bold.---I muſt have juſtice.

DUKE.

This is a ſtrange demand.——If he's a villain,
Which he's not like to be;---ſay, who you are
That dare to call him ſo.

EMILIA.

A wretched woman,
Once nam'd Emilia, ſir.

DUKE.

That can not be;---
Heav'n hinder that it ſhould:----the honeſty
Writ in thy face, too much hath won my love,
That I ſhould think thou could'ſt ſo early climb
To infamy like hers.

EMILIA.

When wilt thou break?

DUKE.

Wouldſt thou perſuade me then:----but further proof

Than

Than what bare words can bring, muſt in my breaſt
The certainty produce, that thou art what,
I would not wiſh thou wert:---let's ſee thy face.
Thy dreſs *may* be put on:---I now bethink me,---
If thou 'rt indeed Emilia, thy left arm
Was by an adder bit, and the mark ſtill
Reſts in the place.---Shew that, and I'll believe
Thou art no counterfeit;---[*ſhe uncovers her arm.*]
I'm ſorry for it.

EMILIA.

'Tis not for life I ſue,---read that---but veng'ance:
Veng'ance to ſweeten death.—Oh! noble ſir,
Upon that paper, the proof hangs of more,
Than my ſwoln heart will give me leave to utter.
That Albert you ſo cheriſh, did ſuborn
A ruffian to deſtroy me;---to which ſin,
I could another add, but that the word's
Too vile to be pronounc'd.----The murd'ring of me
Was his leaſt crime, which, to conceal for ever,
He, or his partner, forg'd that lying letter,
Meaning to leave it in the chamber near me,
When they had done the deed.

DUKE.

" That the good Albert."----
What do I ſee! ---- " intreat that heaven."----It cannot,
Cannot be his!---Take therefore heed Emilia;

If

If thou doſt ſlander him, death ſhall want pains
To puniſh thee enough.

EMILIA.

I will be bound
To prove, ſir, at your royal bar of juſtice,
That he's a villain, murd'rer, and ſeducer;
Breaker of oaths, and falſer than mere words
Have pow'r to ſet him forth; or may all torments,
That cunning can deviſe for perjur'd wretches,
Fall on my crimes, and make the death I merit,
Fearful as juſt:---upon my knees I aſk it.

DUKE.

I know not what to think.

EMILIA.

I do not wiſh
You ſhould believe me yet;---only ſuſpend
The judgment of my crimes, till I can prove
What Albert truly is.----I aſk not much,
Yet little as it is, my knees ſhall ſooner
Grow to the ground, than that, which I requeſt,
Be loſt for want of pray'rs:----think me then fix'd
Never to riſe again, if you withhold
The juſtice I demand.

DUKE.

What ſhall I anſwer?

EMILIA.

By the dear aſhes of the man I lov'd,
Torn from my arms by the perfidious Albert;
By the laſt honour of my ſex;---my hopes
Of happineſs deſtroy'd;---and by theſe tears,

Theſe

These silent speakers of my guilt and grief,
Let me not kneel in vain:----hear,---hear me,---
hear me;
Lest, in distraction and despair, I vent
My curses upon heav'n; and by that deed,
Go to my grave, more criminal than all
My other sins, tho' great, had pow'r to make me.

DUKE.

I cannot bear this sorrow:----kneel no more.---
Who of my train are waiting?----let me rather
Credit than doubt too much.----I will for Padua
Immediately set out;----yourself shall shortly
Under safe conduct come.---Where are our horses?

CORNELIO *at the entrance.*

Ready my lord.

DUKE.

Bid the attendants mount,
For we will lose no time;----[Emilia *offers to speak with* Cornelio.]
What would you with him?

EMILIA.

There is a gentleman, with whom I'd speak,
Attending me without.

DUKE.

Let him be sought;
Nearly at noon shall both of you be heard.---
Your witnesses I doubt not will be ready?

EMILIA.

They shall be found in call.

DUKE.

DUKE.

I will myſelf
Appoint you an eſcort;---and on the inſtant
Set out before.

EMILIA.

Humbly, my lord, I'm bound
To thank you for this grace.

EMILIA. *Alone.*

I recollect,
E'er my kind ſiſter's woman, at the priſon
Took her adieu, theſe words ſhe utter'd to me:
" Wringing her hands, and mingling with her
" accents
" Shortly heav'd ſighs, thus did my miſtreſs bid me:
" *Say to Emilia, if the cruel fever*
" *Now in my blood, heav'n makes not mortal to*
" *me,*
" *'Tis my firm hope we yet ſhall ſee each other.*"
Surely her pray'r was heard; and tho' I never,
Never will bring pollution to her preſence,
Yet is my wiſh compleat; ſince ſmiling veng'ance
Comes now at laſt to make my death leſs bitter.

EMILIA. LUCIUS.

EMILIA.

Return, ſir, to your friends---in every point
Has my requeſt been heard.

LUCIUS.

LUCIUS.

I know it well
I've ſeen the duke ſet out, and was inform'd
By him who ſent me hither, that at noon
Your cauſe is to be heard :---doubt not our care.
To Padua will we ſtraight.

EMILIA.

It is enough.

LUCIUS,

The villain, on whoſe witneſs hang the hopes
Of you and of ourſelves, upon a litter
Will we convey with us.

EMILIA.

I pray you tell me.---
You have already told me---but my mind
Was at that time ſo hurt, as to impair
The office of my ear ;---how did you leave him ?
I can attend you now.

LUCIUS.

Worſe than before,
When yourſelf ſaw him laſt.---The conſciouſneſs
Of his deep guilt, join'd with the pain he felt,
So wrought upon his mind, that it was fear'd
He ſhortly would go mad.

EMILIA.

Look to preſerve
If poſſible, his life ;---to all of us
It is of moment great :----what reſts, I leave
To you and your friends' diligence.---The duke

Com-

Commands that I depart, conducted hence
By ſome of his own train;---therefore, farewell:
E'er ev'ning I will mend my wiſh with that
Which ſhall be worth your thanks.---Fail not at Padua.

SCENE IV. *The houſe of* Albert.

ALBERT. REGINALD.

ALBERT.

Your name is Reginald?---there's for your labour;
And for Sebaſtian,---think of him no longer,
He cannot have eſcap'd.

REGINALD.

I fear ſo truly.

ALBERT.

Nay,---they ſpare none.----Wait here about the houſe,
I'll ſpeak to you again e'er night approaches;
Mean while, as to thy boſom I have truſted
All the paſt night's tranſactions:---to be proſp'rous,
Lock up the ſecret there.

REGINALD.

Fear not, my lord.

ALBERT.

When I would ſee you, I will ſend you notice;---
Leave me till then.

ALBERT. *Alone.*

He muſt be dead—that's certain;
With him, Emilia too:——fatigue and terror
Muſt, in the woods ſhe fled to, have perform'd
The dagger's purpoſe foil'd.——That ſhe eſcap'd
Hath doubly wrought me good; firſt, that herſelf,
On whoſe contracted brow ſat wrongs, proclaiming
Woe to my ſafety,—is deceas'd; and, with her,
Not leſs according to my wiſh;—Sebaſtian,
Gone to the dead:——two obſtacles remov'd
That lay athwart my peace:——for Julio,—he
By juſtice was cut off, and nothing, I,
In the world's ſight, ſave as by law compell'd,
Enforc'd to take him hence. Then live the provoſt,
For, in his life no thorn can goad my ſafety.——
So might it be; but I,—to quell entirely
Foul apprehenſion,—will to judgment bring him
On the ſucceeding morn;—ſo, ſmooth my pillow
With the ſame hand, that executes the ſentence
Of the kind law.——I grow in guilt! I proſper!
Guilt, did I ſay? what guilt? the fault, for certain,
Lay in the tempter—I, the tempted only,—
To the ſuggeſtion of her beauty yielded,
Sinn'd on compulſion, and offended, where
My nature was not free. How now? what want you?

SERVANT. *coming in.*

The duke is coming here.

ALBERT.

The duke!—a madman!
Where did you dream this news?—The duke's at Venice.

SERVANT.

My lord, I can aſſure you that his grace
Is in the ſuburbs now:——one of his train
Waits in the houſe here, and requeſts admittance.

ALBERT.

Merciful heav'n! The duke! What brings him hither?
Fellow, come near me.

SERVANT.

What is't ails your lordſhip?

ALBERT.

He will diſcover all, and therefore—nothing.——
I muſt of force be calm.—Go to the priſon;
Say to the goaler, I would ſee the provoſt;
Let him be brought forthwith.——Fly, and return
With all the ſpeed thou canſt.—I am too hot,
Impatient and ſuſceptible of fear,
When nothing's at the worſt. I'll found the provoſt;
Gain him with gold, and that way, bid defiance
All that can threaten me.

ALBERT. REGINALD.

REGINALD.

My lord—my lord,
We are undone!——Emilia——

ALBERT.

What of her?—

REGINALD.

Is coming back to Padua.

ALBERT.

ALBERT.

Fire and devils!

Let us both fly.

REGINALD.

Our flight, ſir, is cut off,
If that would do us good.—By now, Mecenas
Is almoſt at the gate.

ALBERT.

Diſtracting moment!
Mecenas coming hither; and Emilia
On the way too!—come they together, ſaid you?

REGINALD.

Not in one company.—She's with his followers,
Whom he, it ſeems, outrides.

ALBERT.

To go to Venice:
Thither and back ſince midnight!—'tis impoſſible.

REGINALD.

Yet 'tis as true as there is light about us,
They are both coming here;—and hark—his trumpets.

ALBERT.

Have mercy on us heav'n!

SERVANT *coming back.*

My lord—the provoſt.

REGINALD.

I gueſs at your intentions, but you muſt
No longer think of that:—let me adviſe you,
Order him back.

ALBERT.

I know not what to do,
And therefore will be rul'd. Obey this gentleman.
[Reginald *whiſpers to the ſervant, who departs.*]
I now repent too late.

REGINALD.

The time is precious.——
Go in and meet the duke.---Support your innocence,
'Tis deſperate I grant;—but we muſt take
Our confidence and courage from deſpair.
Call loudly to be heard.——I will be by,
And ſwear to what you ſay.---Our common ſafety
Goes hand in hand.——Submit with ſeeming joy
To what he may impoſe;——even loſs of freedom
Say you will look on as the happy means
That ſhall your honour clear.—Again! he's coming.

ALBERT.

It is the doom's day call, and I am ſummon'd
To my laſt reck'ning.---Ruin'd, wretched Albert!

ACT V.

SCENE I. *An apartment belonging to* Albert.

EMILIA *in her proper dreſs.*

ONCE more—the habit of my guilt and ſhame
Thrown off——I enter this deteſted houſe,
Though not as I was wont, when, what I wiſh'd
Was my lord's life;—now, breathing but revenge,
Link'd with the reſtleſs damn'd.---Thou demon then,
Whatever be thy name,----why ſtimulate
With guilt, increaſing guilt,---my ſoul, in death
To fix her anchor there?——What ſight is this,
Which, like a viſion of the night, comes o'er me!
It is my Julio,---my dear lord;---protect me;---
Save me, ye ſaints! and thou, pale, mangled ſpirit,
Reſt in thy tomb.---I know thou com'ſt to tell me
Not to forgive.——I will,—I will have veng'ance:
Yet, whilſt I'm tarrying here,---I loſe the deareſt
Part of revenge.---I ſhould have then been preſent,
When, in his frighted ear, the good Mecenas
Drumm'd his intent.——I ſhould be now, too, by him,

Where, as he ſits, he ponders on his danger.
What have I loſt!—Where,—where,—oh! where about me,
Lodges my ſpirit?—ſay,—that I may ſend it,
Freed from its cumb'ring fleſh, to torture Albert;
And, in full concert to the groans he utters,
Thunder damnation;—my revenge comes elſe
Short of its wiſh.—But whither points my frenzy!—
Let the grave ſpeak, when I am ſhrouded in it;
For, by the way of death, revenge muſt ſhortly
Light me along, and join me there to Julio.
Quickly I come.——'Till then, let pity ſlumber.

SCENE II. *A large hall, contiguous to the firſt ſcene.*

DUKE. OFFICERS of Juſtice.

DUKE.

Now take your places, rev'rend fathers all,
And hither bring theſe parties that appeal
For juſtice to the law.——You of the court,
Know Albert was my friend.——The love I bore him,
No circumſtance, thro' his whole courſe of life,
But muſt bear witneſs.——From his infancy,
Built I his fortunes; and his hopeful youth,

(Not

(Not my own ſon's more dear) in the warm ſun
Of my protection, rear'd.——

DUKE. OFFICERS. ALBERT. EMILIA. ROLANDO. LUCIUS. REGINALD.

DUKE.

I'm ſorry Albert
Thus to behold thee here:——if innocent,
That thy good name, which yet, hath been unblemiſh'd,
Suffers ſuch wrong;—if not, that thy offences
Muſt by myſelf be puniſh'd.—Take then counſel,
And the ſalvation of your ſoul hereafter,
Riſque not to 'ſcape the law.——If you are guilty,
You will, in part, appeaſe unerring juſtice,
Making your peace with heav'n by ſo much eaſier,
As, by how much, a gen'rous frank confeſſion
Lightens your ſentence here. Conſider duly
This our advice, and anſwer to the queſtion:——
Guilty or not?

ALBERT.

My gracious lord, not guilty.

DUKE.

Heav'n ſend thee a deliv'rance.——You Emilia,
Hear his reply; and therefore as you value
That, which your duty to yourſelf and heav'n
Bids you moſt prize,——your everlaſting welfare,
Whilſt you proceed againſt lord Albert here,
Take heed of perj'ry; for of this be certain;

Though at our bar you gain a wicked verdict,
And thro' the blindneſs of your judge, who cannot
Read what the heart contains, to quick deſtruction
Drive an unhappy man; yet that hereafter,
There is another bar, a dread tribunal,
Where by a judge, who cannot err in judgment,
Not only Albert,——but yourſelf,—Emilia,
Shall be proceeded with,——leſs as you ſeem,
Than as you truly are.

EMILIA.

My ſoul and body
Both injur'd by that dev'l, could I redeem them
From ruin irretrievable, I would
Pledge once again, and forfeit if he proves
Better than I have ſpoke him.

DUKE.

Not one only
Is the appellant here; but each, the other,
On his own part, accuſes.—[*to* Emilia.]—You, he ſays,
Conſpir'd againſt his life;——do you confeſs it?

EMILIA.

No;---were I on my death-bed.

DUKE.

Then muſt Albert
Bring proof of the attempt.—You have it ready?

ALBERT.

I have a friend who, from the firſt throughout,
Knows the whole plot:——what inſtruments, what means,

Heav'n

Heav'n and his ſelf perverting their effects,
Were plann'd againſt my life.

DUKE.

That made appear,
Unburthens you of blame, and fixes all
Upon Emilia's head.——Let him be call'd.

ALBERT.

Unhappy as I am,——there lies my grief;
He is not to be found.

DUKE.

How's that!

ALBERT.

I fear
His zeal for his friend's ſervice, hath brought down
Deſtruction on his life.

DUKE.

What! is he dead?

ALBERT.

Dead ſir, and likewiſe murder'd.——It was he,
Who, when Emilia having broke from priſon,
Took ſhelter in the foreſt weſt of Padua,
Led my purſuit;——come hither Reginald.—
Here is a man my liege,—his faithful ſervant;—
Who, had not heav'n been pleas'd to ſave him from it,
Would have partook the fate of his poor maſter.

DUKE.

Come near me:—was the man, that Albert ſpeaks of,
Slain in thy company?

REGI-

REGINALD.

Yes, my dread lord.

DUKE.

Tell me by whom?—and wherefore did they kill him?

REGINALD.

There are a ſet of wretches who ſubſiſt
On plunder, lying harbour'd in that foreſt;——
Thoſe men it was, who from an ambuſh leaping,
Seiz'd on Sebaſtian unawares, and he
Making defence, firſt murder'd and then robb'd him.

EMILIA.

Oh my good lord!—that murder'd man he talks of,
I, alſo do accuſe.

DUKE.

Know you this fellow?

EMILIA.

'Till now I never ſaw him;—but I pray you,
Let him be cloſely guarded.——May deſtruction
Whelm me the moment, that I fail to prove him
Guilty with Albert:——both,—both bloody villains.

DUKE.

Well, he is ſafe;—what can you urge againſt him?

EMILIA.

I know you think me mad; but of that malady,—
Whatever my great wrongs may make me ſhortly,
I'm hitherto as clear,—(the more's my ſorrow,
Not having that, which of my injuries

Would

Would the edge blunt,)—as th' infant yet unborn,
Is free of actual ſin.

DUKE.

Alas!—poor woman!

EMILIA.

There is a man, my liege, hard by attending,——
And Albert knows him too,—who can diſprove
Each ſyllable advanc'd, touching the man
Murder'd and robb'd.——Let me intreat your highneſs
That he be ſent for ſtraight;—this gentleman
Knows where he bides.

DUKE.

Some two or three attend him.

[Rolando *and* Others *go out.*]

EMILIA.

In the mean time, be pleas'd to read this paper,
It will explain itſelf.

ALBERT. *Aſide.*

What means that paper!
What witneſs can ſhe bring of that, which only
Lies here, conceal'd in darkneſs thick as Erebus,
And in the boſom of the ſlain Sebaſtian:
Her huſband is at peace;—ſilenc'd for ever,
Deep in his grave interr'd.—Oh! wherefore did I
Venture the paſt?—if now, when moſt I lack it,
Failing in reſolution,——I permit
Weak fears to ſhake me thus.

DUKE,

DUKE, *ſpeaking of* Reginald.

Guard well that fellow:
Sirrah come near me.—Look thou anſwer truly;
Tell me;—yet ſtay;——I will bethink me:——
Albert,
Where is your provoſt?

ALBERT.

Him, I thought it fitting,
So pleaſe you, to diſmiſs and ſend to priſon.

DUKE.

Wherefore to priſ'n?

ALBERT.

'Twas he, my liege, abetted
Emilia's flight from law.

DUKE.

How know you this?

ALBERT.

He has confeſs'd it, ſir.

EMILIA.

He was compell'd then.

DUKE.

Emilia, ſpeak not you.——Send to the priſon:
Give him ſome token.——I will ſee this provoſt.

ALBERT.

Your grace ſhall be obey'd; but if I might
Preſume a word or two.——

DUKE.

Give him ſome token.—
Pray heav'n, I fear in vain.

ALBERT.

ALBERT.

There is my ring.

[*one goes out.*]

EMILIA.

Here comes my witneſs, ſir;---the man I ſpoke of.

DUKE. OFFICERS. EMILIA. ALBERT. *and* SEBASTIAN, *ſupported by* ROLANDO; *and* OTHERS.

ALBERT. *Aſide.*

What do I ſee!——Sebaſtian here and living!

DUKE.

Come,---which is he?---what's this?---is this your witneſs?

Emilia, why how now!---have you thrown off
All fear as well as ſhame?

EMILIA.

Gracious Mecenas.---

DUKE.

But woe upon thy head; for, on my honour,
Thou, and theſe wretches here, thy vile adherents,
Leagu'd, as I now diſcover, to deſtroy
Our deputy's good name, whoſe worth and honour
Stand both approv'd; and which, not all the arts
Of calumny can wound;---ſhall the laws terrors
Feel in their ampleſt forms.

EMILIA.

My lord, I come not
Harden'd in impudence, my countleſs ſins,

By

By accuſation of a guiltleſs boſom,
Still to increaſe.——Oh! they already bear,——
Like a hard burthen, preſſing on the ſhoulders
Of a tir'd man,---much,---much too heavy on me!
But to demand your juſtice on a villain;
Than whom, I ſtill aver, there is no greater
Through the wide world.

DUKE.

Fie—fie upon thee woman.

EMILIA.

If you regard a poor complaining widow——

DUKE.

Let go my robe.——I will not hear thy ſlanders.

ALBERT.

I have ſtood ſilent by; knowing, my lord,
The malice of this woman, my accuſer,
Would on herſelf return.——This is the man
I ſpoke of to your grace, whom, as it ſeems,
Heav'n, by a kind of wonder, hath preſerv'd
For his friend's uſe.—But, wherefore thus I find him;
Or to what end Emilia brings him hither,
I'm puzzled to divine;——only of this,
I am at laſt convinc'd, that I owe all
The ſhame I have indur'd, not to her malice,
But a diſtemper'd mind.

DUKE.

Is that Sebaſtian?

My dear and valu'd friend.—Alas!—ſpeak to me.

[Sebaſtian *ſtruggles to get looſe.*]

Oh! he is mad.

DUKE.

Be ſure you hold him ſafely.

[*the* Provoſt *is here brought in.*]

SEBASTIAN.

Give,—give me way.——You vomit ſulphur on me.——

This is the burning zone;—I tread in flames:—
Will the clouds never ſcreen me from the ſun!—
Hot, hot, and parch'd!—Come down ye elements,
Let the ſky fall,—whole cat'racts ruſh upon me;
Burſt this ſtrong fence, and deluging my boſom,
Turn the fierce hell that rages there, to winter.

DUKE.

Madneſs indeed!——take him away.

SEBASTIAN.

Oh pity!
This is too much.——'Twas Albert ſtole thy honour;
Turn then on him the ſcorpions of thy veng'ance.
Me thou ſhouldſt ſpare;——for tho' I held the dagger,
He glories in the crime. —— [*he is born off.*]

ALBERT.

Afflicted ſpirit!
How my heart ſhudders to behold his ſuff'rings.—
But let him paſs.——I hold Emilia's meaning
Now but too plain;—and do demand, not kneel for,
Juſtice,

Juſtice, upon that ſorc'reſs and the partners
Of her offence.——The wrongs that touch *me* only,
I, from my ſoul, forgive.—Impudent ſtrumpet!
Where is my friend?---Reſtore him to his reaſon:
Give me him back:——but oh!---vain wiſh;---
thou canſt not.——
No;——the vile arts that have undone him, never
Shall his poor mind reſtore.——Then grant me
juſtice.——
My lord, I urge this boldly, for my honour
Lies now at ſtake;---my dying friend requires it.

DUKE.

Albert; this man, Sebaſtian, as thou callſt him,
Speaks in his frenzy, from a dreadful knowledge
Of his great ſin; and howſoever we
May pleaſe to call him mad, yet, on my honour,
I ſhould ſtand tax'd as partial, to imagine
Thou wert not guilty too.

ALBERT.

Muſt then my fate
(You cannot mean it ſhould) depend, my lord,
On what a madman ſays?

DUKE.

Oh! are you come?---
Provoſt draw near, and overlook this paper,
That from yourſelf, who beſt ſhould know th' oc-
currence,
We may receive report how true 'tis written.

[*the provoſt peruſes the paper, and the duke repairs to his ſeat.*]

EMILIA.

This will confirm his guilt;---fear not Rolando,
For the great love Mecenas bore my huſband,
Will in his breaſt work much to grant that favour
'Tis my intent to beg.——Be certain of it:——
Your——and your fellows' pardon——I will get you,
As 'twere a light reward.

ALBERT. *Aſide.*

All goes to wreck,
And the deceiving angel, that has drawn
My footing into guilt, now to his hell
Flies back, and leaves me hopeleſs.——Ill betide
Thoſe wretches—— who like me,——for ſafety, place
Dependance on the devil.

PROVOST. *Having read the paper.*

As I have hopes
Of an eternal ſtate, this heinous charge,
I could be ſworn, is true.

DUKE

But you, he ſays
Conſpir'd in her eſcape.——Why did you ſo?

EMILIA.

If I may ſpeak, 'tis mine, of that offence
The provoſt to acquit; for, on my ſoul,
Not he, but my good ſiſter, furniſh'd forth
The means by which I fled.

DUKE.

Thou vileſt thing,
Fall'n from on high, into a pit as deep
As the firſt man, or Lucifer once did,——
What ſhall I ſay to thee?

ALBERT.

Your pity, ſir,
I merit,—not your wrath.——My adverſary,
Ruing her huſband's death, eſſay'd to wreck
The loſs upon my head:——that failing,—theſe,
Still thirſting after blood, ſhe hath ſuborn'd,
On purpoſe to deſtroy me, and effect
Her horrible deſires.——Can I ſtand up
Againſt ſo great a force, having no friend,
Save my own innocence?——If I muſt fall,
Heaven's will be done,—I muſt.—Yet for my judge
To join with my accuſers,——I confeſs
Is ſomewhat hard to bear.

EMILIA.

Falſe hypocrite!

DUKE.

Emilia, thou wrong'd relick of a huſband,
Cut off by courſe of law;—the more's thy ſorrow
Give me your pardon for my raſh proceeding
On your ſuppos'd offence.—I thought you guilty,
And in that firm perſuaſion, ſpoke, what now
My nature's griev'd to think of.——Double juſtice
Thy injuries ſhall receive.—[*to* Rolando.] You,
ſir, appear
As wiſhing to ſay ſomething.

EMILIA.

EMILIA.

This, my liege,
Is my laſt evidence; who queſtion'd, will
Give witneſs for the madman, whom indeed
I purpos'd to accuſe.

DUKE.

Firſt let me aſk,
How I may call you, ſir.

ROLANDO.

My name, great duke,
If that you wiſh to know,—myſelf have long
Learn'd to forget, ſince firſt I turn'd my back
On theſe my native walls.——It were a wiſh,
Fruitleſs and fooliſh, to deceive your grace;
Therefore, moſt humbly bending,—I preſume
That the once famous name of Rhynſault, is
No ſtranger to your ear.

DUKE.

The baniſh'd Rhynſault?

ROLANDO.

He;—baniſh'd, ſir, by you.

DUKE.

Art thou the man?

ROLANDO.

No other than his ſelf.

DUKE.

Break up the court;——
Off with her hold.——You have your freedom,
Albert. [*going.*]

EMILIA.

EMILIA.

Oh! ſtay, and hear him, ſir.

ALBERT. *Aſide.*

More than my hopes!

DUKE.

For you, ſir, [*to* Rolando.] that defying our ſtrict law,——
Once baniſh'd our dominions,—have again
Dar'd to return;—we do upon your head,
Pronounce th' immediate puniſhment of death:
You too, [*to the* provoſt.] the evidence of this baſe woman,
Leagu'd in vile compact, murd'rer like,—to ſuck
The blood of a juſt man, ſhall our diſpleaſure,
Feel to your great repentance; but for thee, [*to*
Made nameleſs now by guilt, we ſhall [Emilia.
take time
To ſtudy cruel torments:——for the preſent,
To priſon with them all.

ALBERT.

Break off her hold.

EMILIA.

I will not let him go.—Dread ſov'reign hear me.
Turn, turn your eye upon a wretched woman,
Low at your feet, and deign to grant me juſtice;
Leſt, in the pangs of death, I cry to heav'n,
And his unerring arm purſue the man,
Whoſe judgment wrong'd the friendleſs and the widow.

ALBERT.

ALBERT.

My lord, I muſt intreat you in behalf
Of this poor woman now.——The wrongs ſhe'as done me,
Here I blot out, and aſk no reparation.——
She challenges my pity.

EMILIA

Monſter, peace!
I do refuſe, deteſt, and ſcorn thy pity:——
Such pity finds the wren, chirping to move
The mercy of the hawk.——My lord, whatever,
Whatever comes of me,—beware that ſerpent:—
He hath a ſmooth look,— that's the ſpeckled cov'ring
Which the eye loves; but there's a deadly ſting
Under his chequer'd coat.—Oh! guard againſt it.

ALBERT.

Poor frantic ſoul!

DUKE.

Infatuated woman!
Think'ſt thou ſo light of death, that thou muſt try
All aggravating arts, to make that death
Accompanied with tortures?——If we ſhould
Conſent to thy deſire, to which our mercy,
Unworthy as thou art, ſhall ſcarcely drive us,
What would it profit thee?

ALBERT.

Send her away;
'Tis my intreaty, ſir.—You feed her frenzy.——
She knows not what ſhe ſays.

DUKE.

Let her alone;
She ſeeks it all herſelf.

EMILIA.

Even for that,
I give you my whole thanks, and will ſtand bound
To ſuffer the moſt grievous and foul pains,
Which unrelenting cunning can invent,
Or cruelty inflict,——if I not prove
My accuſations juſt,——all laid in truth
No one in madneſs:—therefore I repeat,
That Albert is a dev'l, damn'd as the fiend
That tempted our firſt parents:—other names
Of raviſher, ſeducer, murd'rer, hypocrite,
Wronger of female virtue; with the reſt,
Swelling the ſcroll of ſin;——all which he is,
And which I will make good;—I ſhall forbear
Calling him dev'l,—to name.

DUKE.

Why, this is ſtrange!
Come,—I will yield;——but Albert, be not you
Aggriev'd at this day's work:---when it is done,
Your honour and your honeſty,---that now
Shine within narrow limits, like a lamp
In a cloſe room confin'd,---ſhall then break forth,
And as a flaming taper, that reflects
Light to the Ether, and its pitchy blaze
Throws far into the night;---all eyes attract
To gaze upon its brightneſs.---Who comes here?

[*a ſervant enters.*]

SER-

SERVANT.

Look to yourſelves.---Sebaſtian hath broke looſe,
From thoſe that were his guard.

DUKE.

We ſee him coming:
Fear nothing,---you are ſafe:---guard here with jav'lins.

ALBERT. *Aſide.*

Oh I am gone again! [Sebaſtian *enters.*]

SEBASTIAN.

Albert, I come
Fainting and weak;---my glaſs of life juſt out.---
Thy penitence to waken.——Oh! be warn'd
By the ſad end I make.——There is no way
To put deceit on heaven.——Convinc'd, too late,
Of this important truth, I now muſt die,
Which had I ſooner known, as never then
My ſoul had lean'd to guilt,---not all the world
Should lure me back from death;---but, as I am,
Worlds would I give, in barter, for one day,
My peace to make with heav'n: that may be thine.
Emilia,---'tis in vain.——I would ſay that
Which my full boſom heaves with,---but, alas!
All but theſe groans, the icy hand of death,
Stops in the paſſage.——You, that can look up
To heav'n,---pray for me.---Reginald come hither,
You may ſay ſomething:---do't, and clear Emilia.
Oh my loſt ſoul!——oh! ſave me. —— [*dies.*]

EMILIA.

Stay Sebaſtian,
And my forgiveneſs take.

[*they all gather about the body.*]

ALBERT. *Aſide.*

Forgiveneſs !---ſaid ſhe ?
Surely that word, if once again but utter'd,
Would ſink me to the earth.——All's over now,
And my guilt known ;---yet wherefore ſhould I join
With my accuſers, and againſt myſelf
Frankly confeſs ?---So from all mouths, keen curſes
Load me in death :---let me ſhun that, and rather
Never ſpeak more,---that pity may, in ſuffering,
Weep o'er my fault, not knowing my deſervings.
I am reſolv'd.

DUKE.

Bear him away.---Oh Albert !
Me, but for this, you had involv'd, a partner
Of your offence, by ſpecious ſhews of virtue,
Holding my hand, when juſtice was demanded.---
Which, to atone, quick puniſhment muſt follow ;
Death, without mercy ;---and may heav'n have pity
On your immortal ſoul. [*to* Reginald.] Come hither fellow :
Tell me the whole.

REGINALD.

Oh pardon ! and I will.

DUKE.

Hence to the torture with him.

REGI-

REGINALD.

Oh for pity!

DUKE.

Anſwer me then.——Speak not a word of pardon.
Tell me and truly!——wherefore was Emilia
Put into hold?

REGINALD.

To murder her, e'er morning.

ROLANDO.

So ſays the writing.-----Further,—here's a dagger
Found in Sebaſtian's pocket;—and a letter,
Which they deſign'd;——their bloody buſ'neſs
finiſh'd,——
Leaving behind them in Emilia's chamber.

DUKE.

That it might ſeem ſelf-murder?—artful villains!

ROLANDO.

Which they had done, but that Emilia's flight
Defeated their intents.

PROVOST.

Well mention'd, ſir!——
For near the time ſhe fled, this morning early,
Lord Albert ſent his warrant by Sebaſtian,
Importing my diſcharge.

DUKE.

Too plain;—too plain!

PROVOST.

Beſides I will be ſworn, that with Sebaſtian,
Came this man to the priſon.

REGI-

REGINALD.

I confeſs it.

DUKE.

Know you this dagger?

REGINALD.

Oh pardon me! that dagger,
Sebaſtian,—with the note he ſpeaks of,—gave me,
Their uſe already known.—The writing, Albert
Forg'd for the purpoſe.

DUKE.

Right:—ſhew *him* the letter.

ALBERT.

I know it not.

EMILIA.

That dagger was my huſband's.

REGINALD.

Sebaſtian told me ſo.

PROVOST.

And what ſtill plainer ——

DUKE.

No further proofs;——it is too plain already,
That he is guilty,——for a thouſand witneſſes
Live in his cheek.——Will you—in pity, Albert,
Of your immortal ſoul,——make frank confeſſion;
Calling on heav'n for hope?

ALBERT.

Hence with the word;
My innocence is my ſtay.

DUKE,

DUKE.

Oh harden'd heart!——
You provoſt we reſtore; but for this fellow,
Who hath deſerv'd his death,—to priſon with him;
We will not hear him ſpeak.

[Reginald *is born off.*]

EMILIA.

This gentleman,—
And theſe—have ſerv'd me much—

DUKE.

You ſhall not need
To aſk a boon for them; and therefore Rhynſault,
Live once more in our favour;——your poſſeſſions
Do we give back.——To thoſe ſo conſorted with you,
Our pardon ſhall extend.

ROLANDO.

Long live your grace.

EMILIA.

For this,—and for my juſtice on my wronger,
I humbly give you thanks, and take my leave.

DUKE.

Go with her one or two.—Have comfort,—heav'n
Hath liſten'd to your pray'rs:——think but on that,
And all things ſhall go well.

[Emilia *with* Rolando *and* Others *go off.*]

I'm full of ſorrow.
This Albert is thy work!——Oh barb'rous man,
What haſt thou done!—If thou that waſt ſo good,
Couldſt

Couldſt fall to ſuch impiety,——this heart
Shall henceforth no man truſt.—Will you perſiſt,
And throw away that jewel of your ſoul,
Which nothing can redeem?

ALBERT.

Art thou a judge?—
Thou art,—and mayſt condemn me to the axe,
But canſt not make me guilty,—to deſerve it.

DUKE.

This is your ſentence.—Hark!—what groan was that? [*another ſervant enters.*]

SERVANT.

Oh my good lord,——Emilia 'as kill'd herſelf.
With her own hand, the deadly ſword ſhe guided,
Snatch'd from the ſide of one that waited near her.
And at her pray'r,——expiring do they bring her
Here to your grace's preſence;——having ſomething——
(Theſe were her words)---to ſpeak---of much importance,
Ere ſhe would die.

DUKE.

Oh run and bid them haſten!

[Emilia *ſupported is brought in.*]

EMILIA.

Bear me ſtill nearer.——Albert, you behold me
Now at my journey's end.——Oh! if you can
Pity at laſt, a miſerable woman,
Hurl'd by thy hand, from innocence and honour,
For your ſoul's ſake confeſs.

DUKE.

DUKE.

Accurſed moment!

EMILIA.

He that ſhall bear the news of this ſelf murder,
To my poor ſiſter's ear,——oh! let him tell her,
Thus, by my death, atoning my offences,——
Once more I claim the title of a ſiſter,
Dear as I was when yet of guilt unconſcious.

DUKE.

Heav'n look in pity on her.

EMILIA.

Think not Albert,
That I am come,——thy few remaining moments
More to imbitter:——no;---for may the wrongs
That have thus brought me low, be bury'd with me.——
Raiſe me my friends.——Oh! I am fainting.——
Albert,
Heav'n knows my heart,——and knows that I forgive thee:——
May heav'n forgive thee too.

DUKE.

Exalted goodneſs!

EMILIA.

Let not my ſov'reign, whilſt my guilt with horror
Silent he views,---bar up his heart,---when pity
Knocks at the gate, and pleads to be admitted.---
Think on the cauſe---the love I bore a huſband.---
Where are you all? darkneſs and death are on me.

Oh

Oh for a moment!—Save me:——I am dying.---
Take me to mercy heav'n,---and pardon Albert.
[*dies.*]

ALBERT.

He muſt be more than man that can bear this!
Room for a fiend.——Ha! dead!——then take me devils,
Share me among you.——Rend me into pieces.---
Give me a thouſand lives, and ev'ry life
A thouſand ages long!——Invent new torments,
And your old ſcorpions ſtill employ on villains
Leſs than my ſelf,---who never yet have murder'd
Goodneſs like this.——Give,---give,---oh quickly give me,——
Give me,---a ſword,----cord,----poiſon;----give me juſtice.——
Juſtice?---oh no!——In kindneſs, let me rather
Fly to the block,——whilſt warm in penitence,---
I can kneel down to death,---leſt hell,---her footing
Once more gain here, and I be loſt for ever.

DUKE.

We thank thee heav'n for this.

ALBERT.

Oh! I have ſinn'd
In the ſhort compaſs of one fleeting day,
More than all hell has methods in an age,
Half to avenge.——Oh Julio!——Oh my friend!
From thy bleſt manſion, on ſo very' a villian,
Do not look down; leſt murder and the guilt
Of my adult'ry, blaſt you.——Where Emilia!

Where

Where art thou now?—Oh! for a draught of Lethe
That I might loſe the knowledge of thoſe horrors
Soon to be mine.

DUKE.

Obſerve the hand of heav'n,
Which——to avenge the wrongs of this poor woman
On the wind's wings——ſince yeſterday——has poſted:
And with the means of puniſhment thus inſtant,
Cloſe on the back of your offence has follow'd:
If you ſee this,——the obdurate part within you
Sure muſt relent, and your unfeeling nature
Start at the thought of woes that never finiſh.

ALBERT.

Start at the thought!—too fatal truth Mecenas,—

DUKE.

But from your duke and thoſe conven'd to judge you,
Prone as we are to infinite tranſgreſſions,
Far be the thought of teaching heav'n to puniſh.
All we can do, is with impartial juſtice
Here to condemn;-----obſerve your ſentence therefore.——
Of the worſt guilt convicted,—we adjudge thee
Straight to the wheel; there to be bound and broken,
And, to the ſight of all the gazing city,——
Languiſh till death.-----Hence with him to the ſcaffold;——

And, of his gracious mercy,----heav'n look down
In pity of your ſoul.

[Albert *is carried off.*]

DUKE.

What now remains,
Is, that with proper honours we inter
The object that lies here.——Her puniſhment
She hath already born,-----and only heav'n
Can ſay how ill ſhe died.----Bear hence the body.